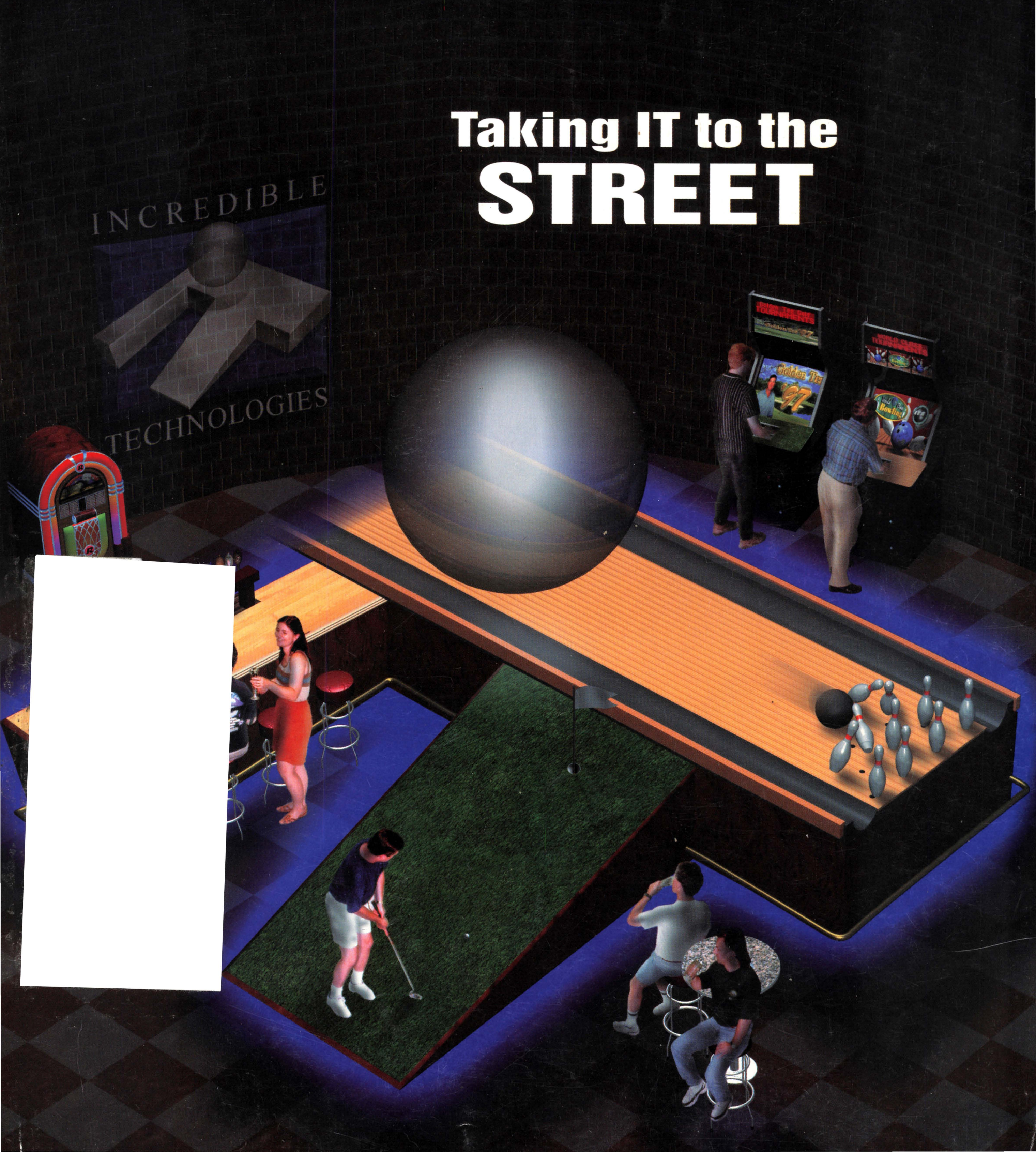
PLAY METER Magazine

VOLUME 23, No. 9 FOR THE COIN-OP ENTERTAINMENT/FEC INDUSTRY AUGUST 1997

Taking IT to the STREET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News BULLETIN

AAMA BOARD CONSIDERS OBJECTIVES

Bob Fay, executive director of the American Amusement Machine Association, told us the association held its first steering committee meeting headed by new president Mike Rudowicz of Konami America. Present at the meeting to review AAMA's programs, in addition to Rudowicz and Fay, were vice president Rich Babich (Colorado Game and Vending Exchange), secretary Frank Cosentino (Namco America), treasurer Joe Sladek (Skee-Ball), assistant secretary Joe Dillon (Williams Bally/Midway), assistant treasurer Ron Carrara (Lazer-Tron), and past president Rick Kirby (New England Coin-Op).

Topics discussed included membership services and the association's objectives for the next two years. Among the approved objectives were exploring alliances to elevate the ASI trade show; dollar coin; violence in games; trade missions like the successful ones to South America, India, and Southeast Asia, and trips planned for Vietnam, the Philippines, and perhaps Romania and Eastern Europe; the promotion program that features radio spots in Rhode Island and Minnesota; education programs including motivational speakers at the annual meeting; and improving the charitable foundation's options which could mean eliminating the banquet and substituting a golf tournament to raise money for a chosen charity.

Fay told Play Meter: "This is one of my favorite meetings, where we can brainstorm and explore opportunities for our association. Rudowicz took control of the meeting and instilled a certain confidence in the entire steering committee. I think he's going to do a great job. I'm looking forward to working with him. It's going to be convenient since we are both in the same city."

BETSON INKS DEAL WITH DOYLE/CCS EXPRESS

H. Betti Industry's Betson Enterprises, Betson's New England Coin-Op, and Betson Advance has signed a deal with Doyle/CCS Express to distribute CCSExpress/Triton mini-ATMs to nine northeastern states: New England, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Betson will offer sales and service for independently owned Triton miniATMs provided through CCSExpress, one of the largest non-bank independent ATM providers. Operators in Betson territory can contact Rick Kirby, Bob Boals, or Dave Learner.

Operators outside of Betson territory looking for a distributor or interested in a territory within the United States can contact Skip Doyle, Doyle/CCSExpress, (941)358-8835 or (888)470-4442. Doyle and CCSExpress are actively studying opportunities to wholesale ATM hardware internationally.

FUN EXPO SPONSORS LBE CONFERENCE

While the Fun Expo international family entertainment center show is underway at the Sands Expo Center Sept. 23-26 in Las Vegas, the Fun Expo-sponsored conference, "Location-Based Entertainment: The New Strategies For Success," will take place Sept. 23-24 at the Mirage Convention Center. Admittance to Fun Expo comes with the conference fee of $395 if registered by Aug. 20 ($495 if after Aug. 20). Conference space is limited to 300. Notable speakers will include keynoter Tom Rapone of the Paramount Parks/Las Vegas attraction Star Trek: The Experience, Roberta Perry of IWERKS, and Rob Snowdon of CocoWalk.

The conference is designed for real estate developers, city and local planners, designers and builders, shopping center owners, and amusement operators. It also will provide vital information and networking for leasing agents, brand managers, marketing managers, advertising companies, technology developers, investors, banks, and other lending institutions. Program director Michelle Leberfeld explained, "Location-based entertainment has become a widely used but only partly understood buzzword." She sees the conference as a learning opportunity for those already developing a location, looking for entertainment partners, or seeking backing for future projects.

THOMSON ENTERTAINMENT FORGES AHEAD

Thomson Entertainment has good reason to celebrate. Not only has Thomson confirmed an order for 20 *Venturer S2* simulators by a European client and made its first sale to the French Cinema chain UGC, but it also has its first simulation theater planned in the United States and a deal set for a 40-seat theater in Taiwan.

The American theater project is the Nickels and Dimes TILT entertainment center in downtown Dallas. The company reports that *Venturer S2* sales have been boosted by deals with the Mercado complex in Orlando, Fla., and Harrah's Hotel & Casino in Lake Tahoe, Nev. *Venturer V14* units have been installed at the St. Petersburg Pier (Fla.) and Six Flags Over Texas, plus one is planned for the NASCAR Cafe themed restaurant in Nashville, Tenn. Other *Venturer V14* deals have recently been concluded with clients in Argentina, Brazil, China, France, Germany, Norway, and Pakistan.

In other Thomson news, Claude Bozzo has been appointed general manager and Seth Foster (formerly of Showscan) has been named sales director. In North American operations William Lantrip has been appointed sales and marketing manager, Tony Peterson has been named senior customer services engineer, and Timi Jackson has joined the team as marketing assistant.

Thomson has also inked an agreement for an exclusive two ride deal with leading ride producer Rocket Films. *Thunder Drive*, a computer graphics adventure, will be released in late summer with a second ride planned for debut at IAAPA in November.

TRADING PLACES

☛ Dave Myers will be leaving his post as vice president of sales and marketing at Merit Industries to take on a new position as vice president of sales for Betson Enterprises. Said Merit president Peter Feuer, "Dave's good people as far as Merit is concerned. We're sorry to see him go but we have a terrific relationship and will still be working closely with Dave." At press time there was no announcement yet on Dave's replacement. Regarding the change, Dave said, "I'm so excited about this opportunity."

☛ Jim Belt is moving from sales manager at Bromley Inc. to a new sales position at Konami America. Jim has been in the coin-op industry for over 19 years and has experience in manufacturing, marketing, and sales. Prior to his term at Bromley he logged years at American Laser Games, Taito America, and Williams Electronics.

PLAYNET LAUNCHES TOURNAMENTS

PlayNet Technologies Inc. announced last month the launch of its first nationally networked game tournament and its first tournament sponsor, Yamaha Watercraft. Each of PlayNet's summer monthly tournaments will feature a Yamaha WaveRunner GP1200 as the grand prize. Prizes will also be awarded for monthly regional, city, and location winners. Events will run through September.

Beyond its slate of sponsored tournaments, PlayNet intends to expand the features and content of its entertainment network. "We have tested our products extensively in the field and are confident that we are bringing robust systems with the tightest software to the market," said Mouli Cohen, a founder and president of PlayNet. For more tournament information, call (415)217-3600.

EXPRESS CAPITAL JOINS WITH GREYSTONE

Express Capital Concepts Inc., a firm organized as a Delaware Corp. to merge or acquire a privately-held company, has signed a non-binding letter of intent to enter into a business combination with GreyStone Technology, a San Diego, Calif.,-based developer of 3-D interactive software. Although the terms have not been finalized, the companies anticipate a reverse split of Express Capital's issued and outstanding shares of common stock to 480,000 shares of the new venture. This will result in 97 percent ownership of Express Capital by GreyStone shareholders, as well as warrant and option holders.

"GreyStone's technical strengths, skill, and reputation as an award-winning developer of 3-D software products is well known," commented Earnest Mathis, president of Express Capital. "This transaction represents an opportunity for our shareholders to participate in the growth of an exciting entertainment software industry."

"In the entertainment software business, networked interactive 3-D digital media is a fast-moving key technology trend," added GreyStone chairman and CEO Richard Smith. "We believe that the companies that are going to be successful in this market are those that are able to get out in front of the key trends and really add value with their software applications."

Q-ZAR MANAGEMENT BUYS CO. SHARES

Tom Butler, chairman and CEO of Dallas, Texas-based laser tag manufacturer Q-Zar, confirmed that he has signed a new agreement on behalf of a management consortium to secure the purchase from the McCarthy Corp. of 7.3 million shares. The McCarthy Corp. was the largest single shareholder of Q-Zar stock. "I am pleased that the deal has been finalized on a positive footing and that the Q-Zar shareholding block is in the hands of the company's management," said McCarthy chairman Rory McCarthy.

Q-Zar has also completed a private placement of $15 million in promissory notes. One half of the notes are secure and mature in June 2000. The other half are unsecured, convertible into shares of Q-Zar at any time commencing March 1998 if not previously redeemed at a price based on the market price of Q-Zar's shares at the time of conversion. The notes are redeemable by Q-Zar at any time. The company expects to replace this short-term funding with the proceeds of a long-term bond issue later this year.

MCGREGOR LAUNCHES WEB SITE

McGregor Enterprises of Pittsboro, N.C., recently introduced its new Web site (http://www.videogaming.com/) featuring information on all of the company's new products, as well as service information, industry and trade association updates, and links to suppliers, customers, and friends. McGregor feels that only through the exchange of information on a timely basis can the industry grow as a whole. The company hopes its Web site will be used by operators both in North Carolina and across the country and welcomes feedback.

DALLAS PAPER PROFILES GAME PLATFORM

The Dallas Morning News published an article last month profiling the emergence of Microsoft as a player in the coin-op arcade industry. The software giant's coin-op evangelist Jason Robar told the paper that Microsoft sees the emergence of a PC platform as a way to help the computer game development community. "If I am opening up the door for them into a whole new market, I have done them a service," he was quoted as saying. However, representatives of traditional coin-op game companies expressed some skepticism to the paper about the plan. "What Microsoft is trying to do is get people interested in playing a computer game in an arcade," the paper quoted Namco America's Lucinda Bender. "I haven't heard our distributors saying this is the greatest thing since sliced bread."

PLAY METER NEWS NOW ON THE INTERNET

For the most current look at the coin-op amusement and FEC industry, check out Play Meter "News Now" on the Internet. Play Meter's Web site, located at (http://www.playmeter.com), is now updated on a weekly basis! ▲

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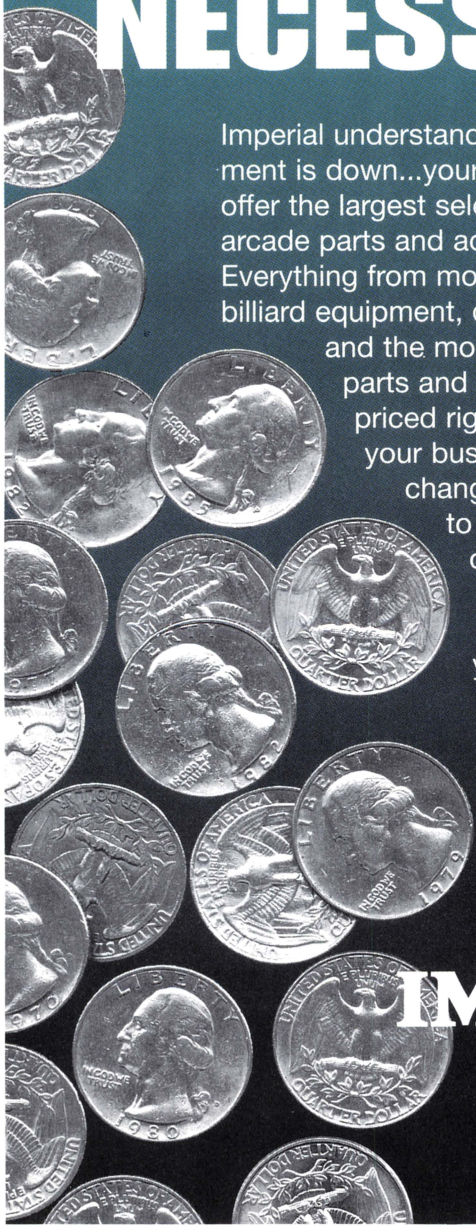

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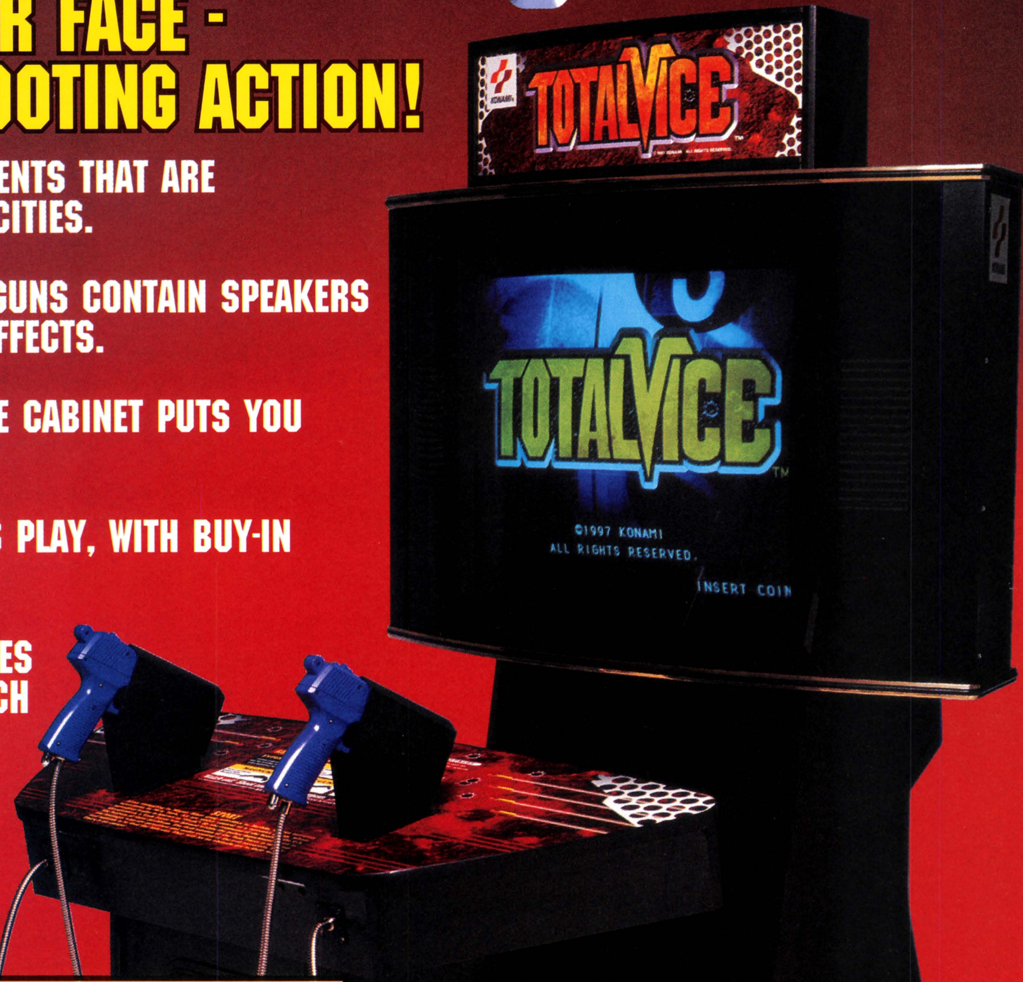
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"Ticket Vic" Fortenbach bucks the trend to high volume game sounds, which can be a big customer turn-off.

COVER

Ask any street operator and he will tell you that Incredible Technologies' **Peter Jacobsen's Golden Tee 3D Golf** is one of the games that helped save the day. The company successfully capitalized on the popularity of the sport, offered challenging game play, and devised the International Tournament System (ITS) with prize awards that give players a reason to return to locations. The tournament system has recently been applied to **World Class Bowling**, and the **Golden Tee '97** Tournament Edition is now available. Look for more innovative game ideas from this young company that was named Manufacturer of the Year this spring at the Amusement Showcase International '97.

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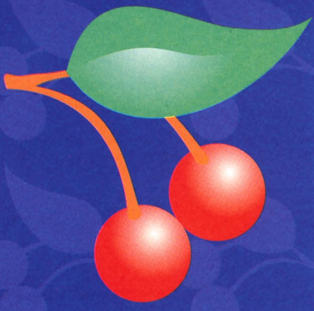

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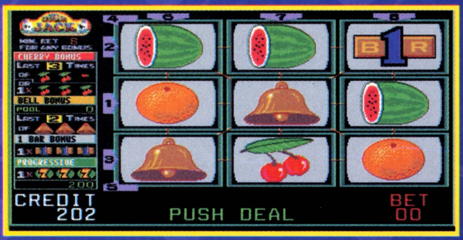

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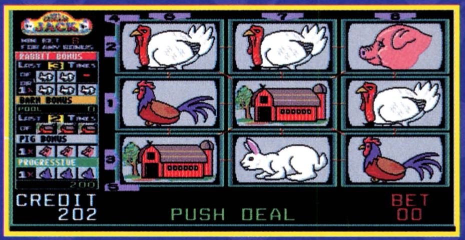

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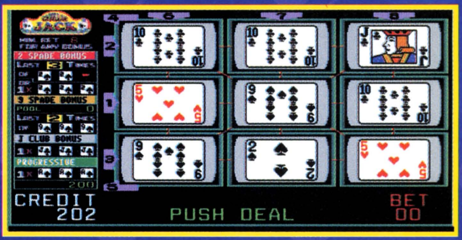

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FROM THE
EDITOR

WHICH TRAITS DICTATE THE mood OF YOUR BUSINESS?

A Japanese proverb says, *"Fall seven times, stand up eight."* Street operators take heed, I think they had you in mind!

Street operators are the heartbeat of the coin-op industry. They've taken more falls than just about anyone, but always get right back up. Ever since the first crude ancestor of the jukebox collected its first coin, the industry has been providing entertainment to the world. And operators have been providing locations with the best entertainment possible. Certainly things are different than they were at the turn of this century, but they are also the same. Come on, you say, you're contradicting yourself.

Valerie Cognevich
Editor

Here's what I mean. The industry is different because we have more sophisticated equipment and players, more professionals, grander expectations, and it's more respectable. But it's the same from negotiating with locations, dealing with legislative bodies, and offering fun in little increments. Customers have been parting with nickels, dimes, and quarters since *Ballyhoo* sat on a bar counter. Operators continue to find new ways to adapt to changing times. Now there are games costing $1 per play that promise more excitement, more crushing moves, more decapitations, and more violence than ever before. Maybe this would have been frowned on 20 years ago; it's what players want now. We're, of course, talking about video. It began with two paddles loping a dot we envisioned to be a tennis ball across a line that in our imaginations was a net.

We don't have to imagine much anymore because it's all laid out for us complete with brilliant graphics, real life characters, and unprecedented realism. But mixed in with this new genre of games are the favorites from years past. *Ms. Pac-Man* continues to charm. But through it all street operators have been called upon to buy the games, keep them clean, move them around, and still try to make a nice return on their investment. That might not have seemed like such a lofty goal at one time; it is nearly impossible today. That investment is expensive and it takes more planning to keep an even keel than it perhaps did years ago.

Street operators are called upon to overcome overwhelming challenges. You can't help but admire them. And because it seems implausible to expect anyone to endure through it all, we often hear comments like, "Street operators are nearing extinction!" I don't know about you, but I take great exception to remarks like that. Street operators still have opportunities. Never have there been such marvelous jukeboxes to satisfy even the most sophisticated location. The crisp, clear sound is good enough even for teenagers who pride themselves on being music experts.

Pool tables and other such equipment will always be considered the core of a street operator's business. But it can't be taken for granted. An operator we talked to cited details as the difference between a successful operator and one doomed to fail. But details are so darned easy to overlook and no one really wants, or feels it's necessary, to make them a priority. I read this quote and never realized how apt it was for operators: "Everyone wants to save the world, but no one wants to wash the dishes." The big things matter, but you already know that. But so do the little things and maybe those dishes need to be washed.

If you talk to a hundred operators, you'll get a hundred different comments on the state of the industry: it's great, it stinks, I want out, I love it. Some operators claim to be seeing light at the end of a rough tunnel of industry mutation, some bitterly complain but admit they're still making a decent living but with more effort, and some are finding opportunities beckoning them into more generous bottom lines. Isn't it a commentary in itself on our industry when so many, doing basically the same thing, can have such varying opinions?

Enthusiasm, eagerness, commitment, and high expectations can't be far away when a business is successful. Pessimism, trepidation, discouragement, and shallow efforts are close companions of a failing business. Which dominate your business? ▲

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Equipment Poll

VIDEO KITS

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. Golden Tee ‘97 *(Incred. Tech.)*	8.81	57
2. Tekken 3 *(Namco)*	8.68	165
3. Area 51 *(Atari)*	8.11	1076
4. Mace: Dark Age *(Atari)*	7.90	423
5. Golden Tee 3D Golf *(Incred. Tech)*	7.86	963
6. Police Trainer *(P&P)*	7.74	173
7. World Class Bowling *(Incredible Tech.)*	7.45	290
8. Point Blank *(Namco)*	7.31	573
9. Tournament Solitaire *(Dynamo)*	7.25	545
10. Strikers 1945 *(Worldwide)*	6.91	150
11. Bust-A-Move Again *(Taito)*	6.82	474
12. Tekken 2 *(Namco)*	6.82	986
13. Die Hard Arcade *(Sega)*	6.80	355
14. Three *(Capcom)*	6.73	79
15. Raiden Fighters *(Fabtek)*	6.67	71
16. X-Men vs. Street Fighter *(Capcom)*	6.63	279
17. Street Fighter EX *(Capcom)*	6.52	2
18. Metal Slug *(SNK)*	6.45	418
19. Raiden DX *(Fabtek)*	6.34	346
20. Raiden II *(Fabtek)*	6.25	785
21. Lethal Enforcers *(Konami)*	6.24	1618
22. Bust-A-Move *(SNK)*	6.19	483
23. Aero Fighters 3 *(SNK)*	6.16	65
24. Maximum Hangtime *(Midway)*	6.09	45
25. Super Sidekicks 3 *(SNK)*	6.08	73
26. Marvel Super Heroes *(Capcom)*	6.04	382
27. Super Puzzle Fighter II *(Capcom)*	6.00	53
28. Great 1000 Mile Rally 2 *(Kaneko)*	5.95	44
29. Pang 3 *(Worldwide)*	5.82	40
30. Soul Edge II *(Namco)*	5.76	207

COUNTERTOPS

1. Megatouch XL *(Merit)*	8.76	171
2. Megatouch IV *(Merit)*	8.42	797
3. Megatouch Tournament *(Merit)*	8.17	390
4. Touchmaster *(Williams)*	7.33	416
5. Megatouch *(Merit)*	7.00	889
6. Concorde 1 *(JVL)*	6.57	121
7. Magical Touch *(Micro)*	6.36	518

CLASSIC VIDEOS

1. Out Run *(Sega)*	6.71	32
2. Ms. Pac-Man *(Bally/Midway)*	6.49	*
3. Pole Position *(Atari)*	6.48	*
4. Galaga *(Bally/Midway)*	6.30	*
5. Centipede *(Atari)*	6.16	*
6. Raiden *(Fabtek)*	6.06	*

VIDEO DEDICATED

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. House of the Dead *(Sega)*	9.76	60
2. Tourn. 3D Golf *(In. Tech.)*	8.38	246
3. Maximum Force *(Atari)*	8.38	156
4. Gun Blade NY *(Sega)*	7.91	522
5. Time Crisis *(Namco)*	7.53	799
6. Virtua Cop 2 *(Sega)*	7.28	794
7. Solitaire Challenge *(Dynamo)*	6.69	1332
8. Rampage World Tour *(Midway)*	6.62	44
9. Virtua Fighter 3 *(Sega)*	6.50	126
10. Virtual On *(Sega)*	5.92	127
11. Killer Instinct 2 *(Midway)*	5.62	305
12. Virtua Fighter 2 *(Sega)*	5.57	930
13. Run and Gun 2 *(Konami)*	5.19	72

VIDEO SIMULATORS

1. Cruis'n World *(Midway)*	9.39	418
2. San Francisco Rush *(Atari)*	8.83	354
3. Wave Runner *(Sega)*	8.50	218
4. Cruis'n USA *(Midway)*	8.41	1898
5. Daytona USA *(Sega)*	8.36	2042
6. Alpine Racer 2 *(Namco)*	8.31	273
7. Alpine Racer *(Namco)*	8.06	1035
8. Tokyo Wars *(Namco)*	7.93	163
9. Alpine Surfer *(Namco)*	7.92	341
10. Wave Shark *(Konami)*	7.64	172
11. Manx TT *(Sega)*	7.33	518
12. Cyber Cycles *(Namco)*	7.30	866
13. Winding Heat *(Konami)*	7.18	140
14. OutRunners *(Sega)*	6.92	1752
15. Sega Rally *(Sega)*	6.92	743
16. Indy 500 Twin *(Sega)*	6.92	473
17. Suzuka 8 Hours 2 *(Namco)*	6.87	1477
18. Lucky & Wild *(Namco)*	6.48	1346
19. COPS *(Atari)*	6.44	610
20. Prop Cycle *(Namco)*	6.05	140
21. Ridge Racer 2 *(Namco)*	5.79	468

PINBALLS

1. Attack From Mars *(Bally)*	8.22	800
2. Scared Stiff *(Bally)*	8.05	432
3. The Addams Family *(Bally)*	7.60	3270
4. Theatre of Magic *(Bally)*	7.28	1142
5. Junk Yard *(Williams)*	7.21	201
6. Star Wars Trilogy *(Sega)*	7.04	115
7. Fast Break *(Bally)*	7.00	22
8. Pinball Magic *(Capcom)*	6.91	211
9. Arabian Nights *(Williams)*	6.76	428
10. Star Trek: TNG *(Williams)*	6.57	1664
11. Batman Forever *(Sega)*	6.50	139
12. Safecracker *(Williams)*	6.41	121
13. Twister *(Sega)*	6.38	300
14. World Cup Soccer *(Bally)*	6.33	1055
15. Independence Day *(Sega)*	6.29	228

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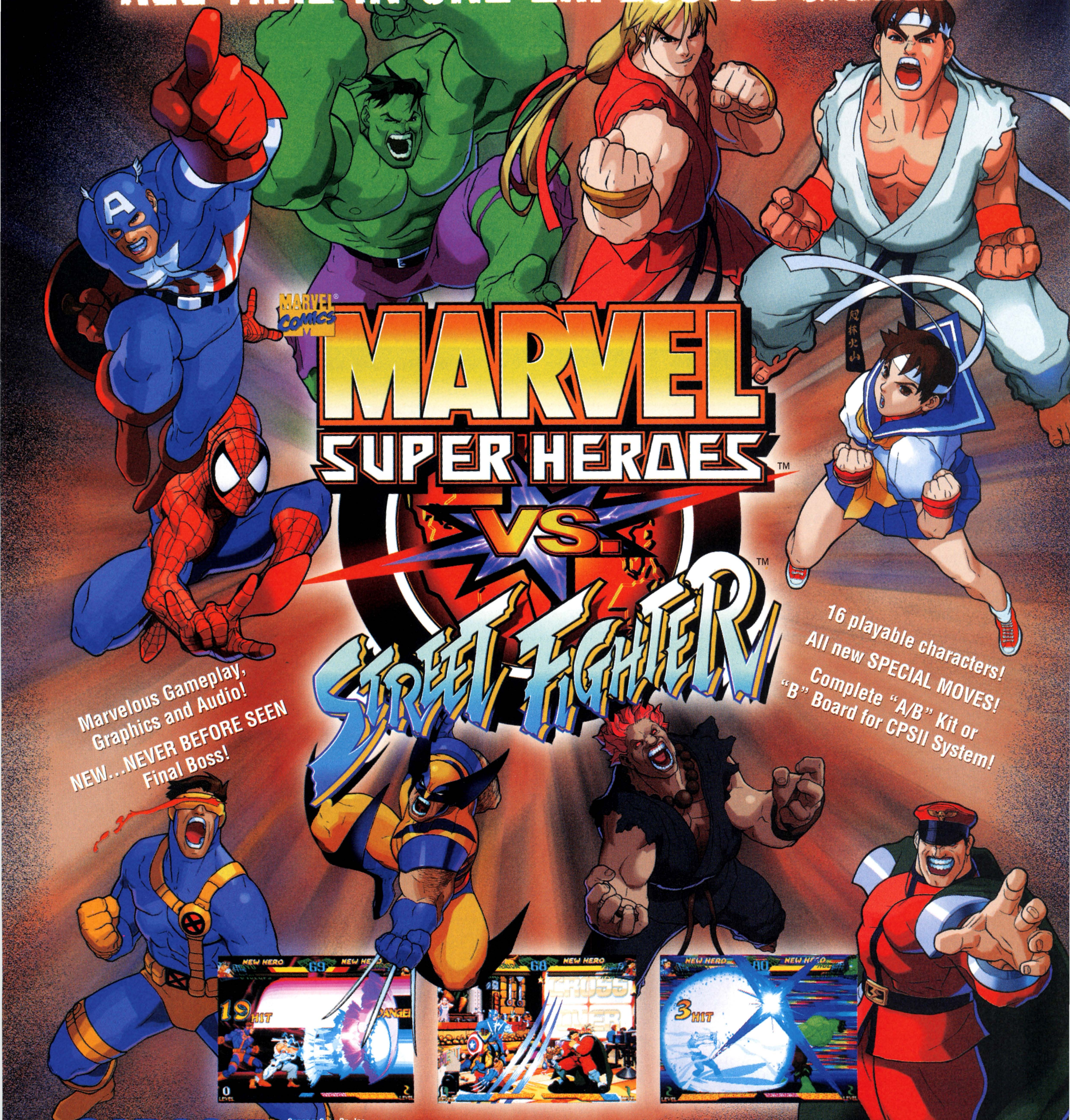

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Equipment Poll

REDEMPTION

ALLEY BOWLERS

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1.	Skee-Ball Lightning *(Skee-Ball)*	8.29	772
2.	ICE Ball *(ICE)*	8.17	433
3.	Skee-Ball *(Skee-Ball)*	7.14	570
4.	Smartball *(Smart)*	6.92	205

SPORTS GAMES

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1.	Super Shot *(Skee-Ball)*	8.20	515
2.	Hoop It Up *(Atari)*	7.86	800
3.	Shoot to Win *(Smart)*	7.30	455
4.	Full Court Frenzy *(ICE)*	7.00	325
5.	Rage in the Cage *(Fun Merchants)*	6.75	279
6.	Hoop Shot *(ICE)*	6.56	118
7.	Full Court Fever *(ICE)*	6.53	528
8.	Around the World *(UETD)*	6.17	181
9.	Arm Champs *(Jaleco)*	5.83	193
10.	UB-QB Football *(Skee-Ball)*	5.81	112
11.	Slugfest *(Williams)*	5.16	5

SINGLE COIN PUSHERS

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1.	Jungle Jive *(Coastal)*	8.42	1013

SINGLE CRANES

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1.	Rainbow *(Rainbow)*	9.33	634
2.	Classic Watch Crane *(Smart)*	7.88	520
3.	Pit Stop *(Smart)*	7.86	123
4.	Big Choice *(Fun Merchants)*	7.52	548
5.	Clean Sweep *(Smart)*	7.46	730
6.	Jumbo Crane *(Grayhound)*	7.44	549
7.	Skill Crane *(Grayhound)*	7.09	308
8.	Candy Crane *(Smart)*	6.69	389
9.	Hollywood Crane *(Maxwell)*	6.45	85
10.	Action Claw *(Fun Merchants)*	6.33	547

CHILD-SIZE GAMES

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1.	Shoot To Win! Jr. *(Smart)*	7.18	527
2.	Smart Toss Em *(Smart)*	6.88	440
3.	Jr. All American *(UETD)*	6.33	55
4.	Feed Big Bertha *(Smart)*	6.04	268
5.	Hightops *(Skee-Ball)*	5.86	53
6.	Bozo Basketball *(Design Plus)*	5.44	60
7.	Kiddie Whac-A-Mole *(Bob's Space)*	5.43	36
8.	Skee-Toss B.C. *(Skee-Ball)*	5.40	6
9.	Awesome Toss 'Em *(Lazer-Tron)*	5.38	119

ROLL DOWNS

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1.	Spin-a-21 *(Lazer-Tron)*	7.17	110
2.	Spin To Win *(Lazer-Tron)*	7.11	631
3.	Jungle Rama *(Lazer-Tron)*	6.33	220
4.	Clown Roll Down *(Bay Tek)*	6.27	156

NOVELTY

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1.	Cyclone *(ICE)*	9.29	1164

REDEMPTION

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
2.	Treasure Falls *(Planet Earth)*	8.71	509
3.	Colorama *(Bromley)*	8.18	796
4.	Dinoscore *(Planet Earth)*	7.97	992
5.	Solar Spin *(Lazer-Tron)*	7.46	312
6.	Round 'n Round *(Astro)*	7.43	624
7.	Flip N Win *(Planet Earth)*	7.33	341
8.	Steer Crazy *(Fun Industries)*	7.00	65
9.	Pop-A-Slot *(Coastal)*	6.88	302
10.	Hop-A-Tic-Tac-Toe *(Data East)*	6.29	34
11.	Cosmo Gang *(Data East)*	6.13	2
12.	Simple Simon *(Am. Sammy)*	6.08	90
13.	Pop-A-Ball *(Coastal)*	6.00	84
14.	Magic Mr. X *(Am. Sammy)*	5.50	37

COIN DROP GAMES

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1.	Wheel of Fortune *(Fun House)*	8.86	354
2.	Big Haul *(Benchmark)*	8.83	466
3.	Smokin' Token *(Seidel)*	7.92	942
4.	Wheel 'M In *(Bromley)*	7.74	912
5.	Goin' Rollin' *(Seidel)*	7.67	677
6.	Roll For Gold *(Benchmark)*	7.10	324
7.	Pirate's Gold *(Lazer-Tron)*	7.00	217
8.	Rock-N-Bowl *(Bromley)*	6.95	377
9.	Home Run Hitter *(CCI)*	6.62	526
10.	Cut the Cheese *(Sega)*	6.42	442
11.	Chicken Dash *(Konami)*	6.33	205
12.	The Mask *(Data East)*	6.25	596
13.	Coin Circus *(Am. Sammy)*	6.08	208
14.	Super Bank It *(Lazer-Tron)*	5.89	40

GUN GAMES

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1.	Miner's Revenge *(Lazer-Tron)*	7.43	155
2.	Big Mouth *(Meltec)*	6.31	108
3.	Boom Ball *(Meltec)*	6.25	13
4.	Knock-Down *(Meltec)*	6.06	85

BOPPING/STOMPING GAMES

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1.	Spider Stompin' *(Jaleco)*	7.13	763
2.	Ribbit Racin *(Lazer-Tron)*	7.13	643
3.	Whac-A-Mole *(Bob's Space Racers)*	7.00	102
4.	Mouse Attack *(ICE)*	6.86	98
5.	Wacky Gator *(Data East)*	6.82	299
6.	Swamp Stomp *(Lazer-Tron)*	6.71	455
7.	Cracky Crab *(Namco)*	6.14	131

Results are based on monthly Equipment Poll ballot returns. Point Value = average of ballot ratings on a scale of 1-10; Longevity Points = standings on Best 60 combined game lists (#1 game receives 60 points, #2 game receives 59 points, etc.) **Indicates new or reappearing games.*

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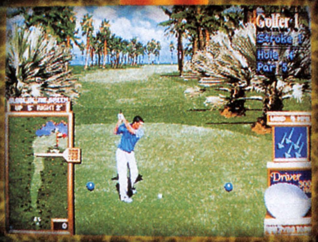
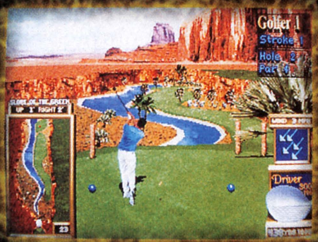
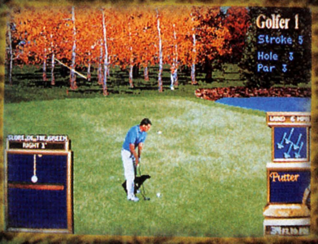


Golfer 1
Stroke
Hole
Par
Driver



Golfer 1
Stroke
Hole 2
Par
Driver



Golfer 1
Stroke 5
Hole 3
Par 3
Putter

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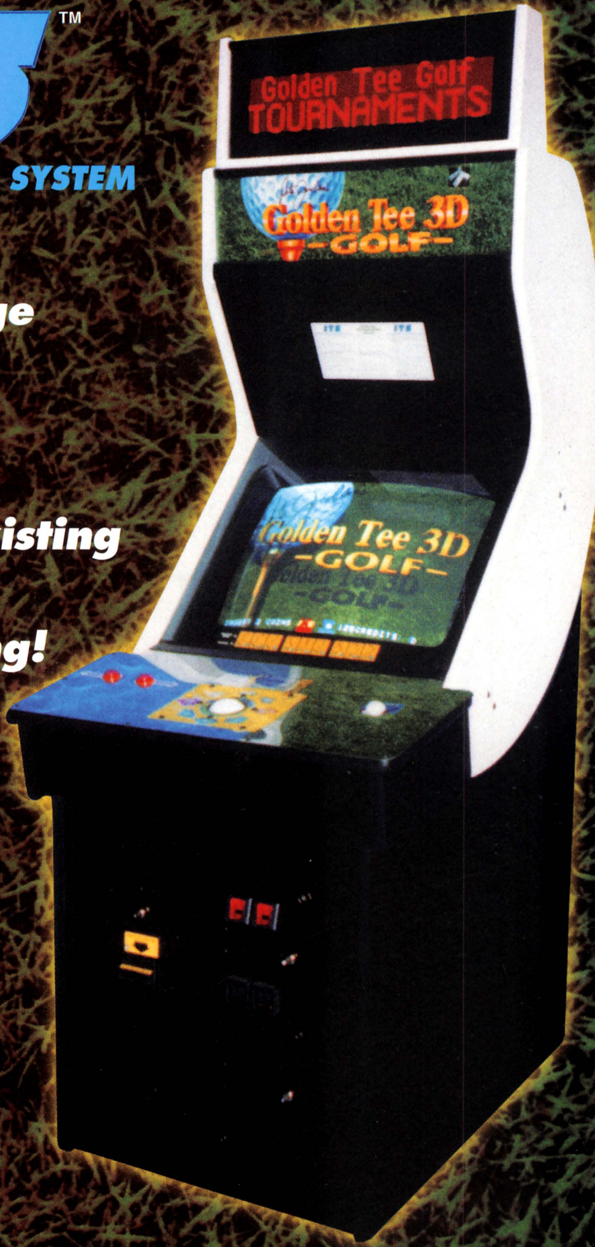

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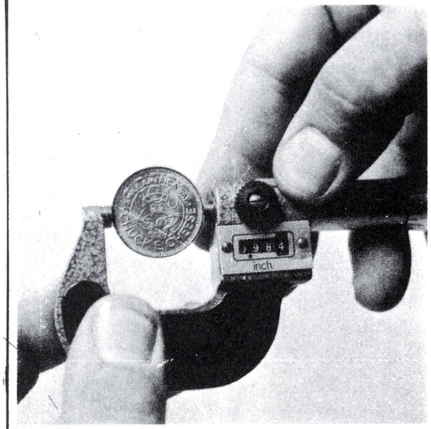

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Take your CROWDS where you can get them

Rarely do we see crowds around a new coin-op machine these days, unless it's a fancy simulator. Certainly not parents, teens, and little ones all interested in the same machine. But it happened on June 22 when I was on the BC Ferries' Spirit of Vancouver Island vessel bringing commuters and visitors from Vancouver, British Columbia, to the province's capital of Victoria.

The machine in question happened to be one of the kinetic-style bulk vending machines, in this case *Gumbotron,* on test through Canadian Coin Machine of Burnaby and Ryan Vending of Victoria. The vessel does not fit the typical notion of a ferry. This one is 11,800 long tons and holds 400 vehicles. It catered to its customers with a buffet, cafeteria, snack bar, vending machines, gift shop, and two game rooms outfitted with up-to-date equipment such as Sega's *Super GT,* Williams' *NBA Fast Break,* and Namco's *Tekken 3.* Victoria is on Vancouver Island and the ferry trip is 90 minutes each way, so travelers have time on their hands.

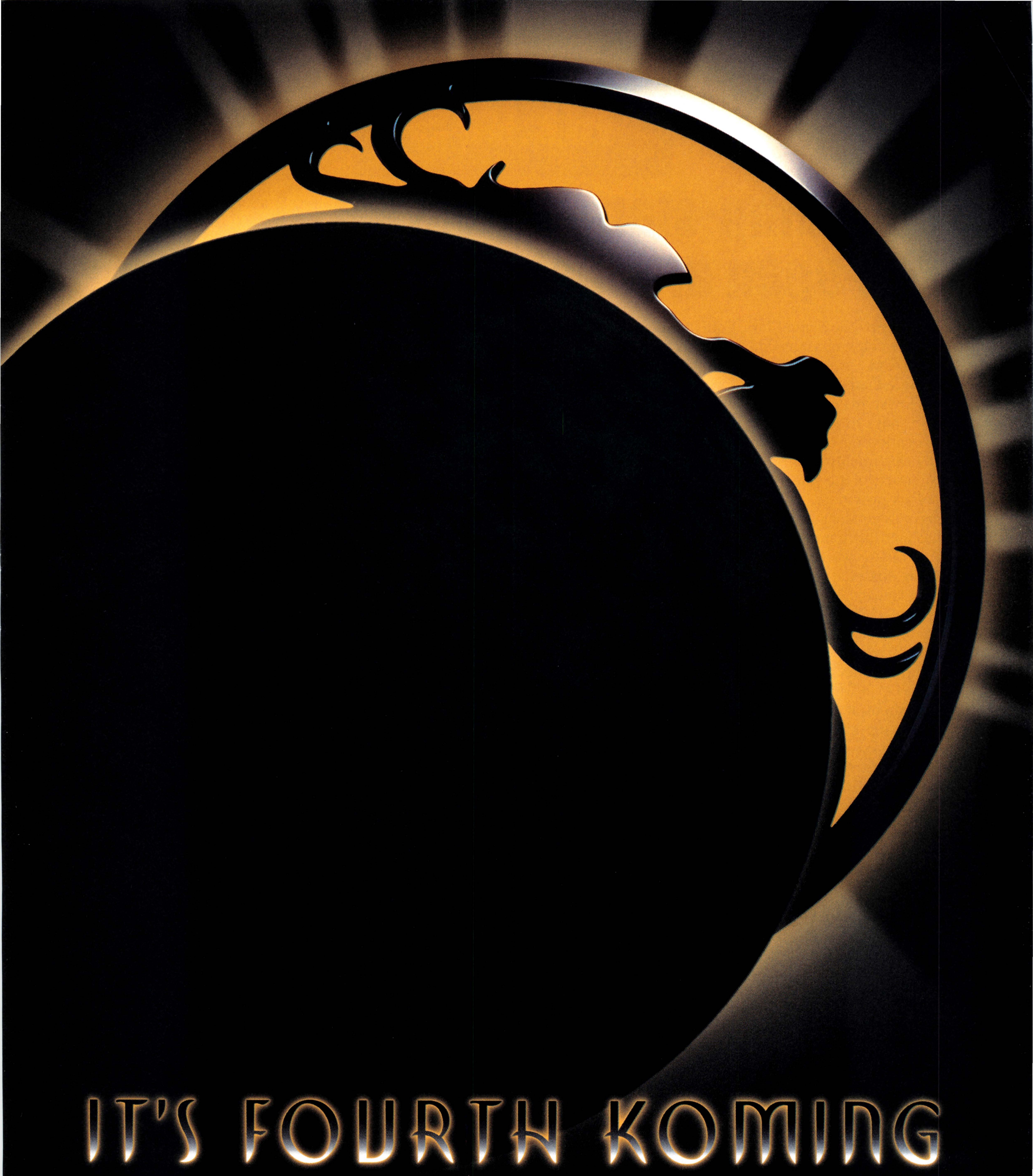
The group around the vending machine was smiling at all the antics of the gumball as it moved from the clear hopper on top and took a wild ride through ramps and mazes. Lights, sound, and action kept the folks entertained while waiting for the gumballs. The machine did not take up much space and it was in a good spot for traffic flow. It was hard to miss, a colorful light purple with bright graphics.

I can't say I know the actual cost of gumballs these days, but at a 25-cent vend the profit margin should be hard to beat. Generally, these kinetic-style machines are a bit pricey, anywhere from $1,200 or $1,500 for small ones up to $2,600, $3,200, and $5,000 for big ones, depending on the make and model. However, and this is a big however, the ROI is excellent according to operators who have them (see bulk vending articles in this issue).

One operator with kinetic-style machines on location as well as traditional videos and pins said that while fellow operators think nothing of paying $10,000 for a video driver, they wouldn't consider that kind of investment in bulk vending. A missed opportunity is the way he looks at it.

Anytime you can draw a crowd it's good for business. That doesn't mean that these machines can go anywhere and do fantastic. That will be true in high-traffic spots. Still, consistent revenue is a welcome sight in today's coin-op climate, no matter what type of equipment is responsible for the numbers. Bulk vending in general may be an undiscovered world, one that bears investigation for those seeking new coin-op venues. ▲

Bonnie Theard
Managing Editor



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COIN-OP NEWS

Intel jump-starts universal platform with open arcade architecture forum

Intel Corp., the Santa Clara, Calif.,-based manufacturer of computer chips, announced last month the formation of the Open Arcade Architecture Forum, an industry association with more than 60 members to promote the development of arcade systems based on the Pentium II processor. The OAAF seeks to create marketing opportunities for arcade and location-based entertainment (LBE) and provide consumers top-quality games both in and out of the home.

Members of the association include technology and building block providers; game developers; 3-D game development tools vendors, hardware developers; and coin-op game publishers, distributors, and operators.

The OAAF will encourage development of hardware and software—based on an open architecture PC platform—for arcade systems, LBE, and high-end visual entertainment for the home. Delivering the quality of traditional arcade entertainment, games based on open arcade architecture PCs may be enhanced with new features such as multiplayer interaction and Internet access, according to Intel.

“The Open Arcade Architecture Forum will encourage the development of hardware and software for open arcade systems through proactive market development efforts,” said Claude Leglise, vice president of Intel’s content group. “This will help ensure systems and software compatibility, while delivering arcade-game performance equaling or exceeding proprietary systems.”

The Open Arcade Architecture (OAA) specification, announced by Intel in April at the Computer Game Developer’s Conference, now supports dual processor-based arcade systems. At the Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3), held in Atlanta in June, both Evans & Sutherland and Ubi Soft showed arcade games on dual Pentium II processor-based systems. Dual processor-based systems allow for faster, richer games, and provide additional processing power for networking, video, and voice conferencing.

The OAA specification is based on the Pentium II processor with MMX technology, the accelerated graphics port and high-performance 3-D graphics accelerators. The specification and information on the OAAF is available at (www.openarcade.com).

Plans for the new forum include facilitation of the development and distribution of OAA products through activities such as quarterly meetings to exchange ideas, technical sneak peeks, a Web site, newsletters, and cooperative marketing programs. The OAAF’s first meeting is scheduled for Aug. 26 in Santa Clara.

“We welcome the opportunity to work with others in the arcade and location-based entertainment industry in our continuing effort to develop leading-edge 3-D technology and super-arcade systems, such as the E & S Virtual Glider shown at E3,” said Rick Maule, vice president and general manager of desktop graphics at Evans & Sutherland. “The Open Arcade Architecture Forum will provide us timely information and valuable business relationships.”

The open architecture should provide coin-op arcade and LBE operators a reduced cost of ownership, since individual platforms will no longer be dedicated to a single game, Intel representatives argue. The same system can offer a variety of games without major hardware revisions.

Founding members of the OAAF include:

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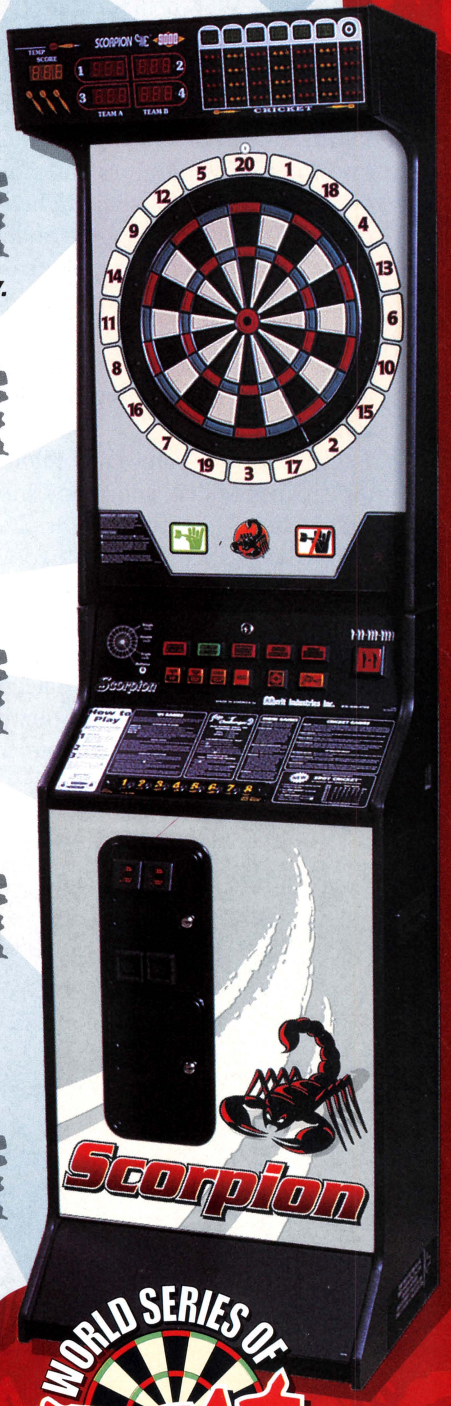

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Merit forges ahead with new countertop, update

Merit Industries recently introduced the newest in its series of *Megatouch* units, the *Megatouch 5*, as well as five new games, great photo content, and an advertising feature for its Megatouch XL unit. The new XL features are available as a free update to all XL owners minus a small shipping charge.

The *Megatouch 5*, which is available as the sixth upgrade for earlier models, offers three new games, new Trivia and Phraze Craze content, and the interactive Mega-Link competition option. Operators can now link machines and give players a chance to compete head-to-head, machine-to-machine on games like Double Solitaire, Trivia, and Pile On, as well as the company's popular card games.

New games included on *Megatouch 5* are: Mega-Mind, Pile On, and Quintzee. The connections to link machines come with any new game, chip kit, or board update, and the unit also features a selectable high score clear feature for locations.

The XL's new games are: Photo Hunt, Pix Mix, Power Solitaire, Quick Match, and Strip Club Poker. Special features include a timer for risque material, an auto clear feature which removes high scores every two weeks, and the Six Star Enable program giving locations a pin number to clear high scores, control the machine's volume, and program two of the six video billboards, which can be used for advertising and include different fonts, backgrounds, and clip art related to tavern and tournament promotions.

Assessing the current countertop market, Merit vice president of sales and marketing Dave Myers said the company has sold more than 50,000 units over the last three years with little or no end in sight in the near future. Myers noted that there are 350,000 liquor licenses in the United States.

"As we continue to innovate a category—that in-your-face adult-oriented entertainment—we will continue to sell these products," he said. "Three years ago people were saying the street operator was toast. The street operator who has taken care of his leagues, bolstered his pool business, and bought countertops is in the best position. If a place has a liquor license and a jukebox, a countertop can make money."

The *Megatouch 5*'s ability to link machines within 100 feet inside a location has met with positive feedback, according to Myers. "Initial tests on this are very good and we are obviously discussing taking this to the next level linking location to location," he added.

Networking machines and providing services such as Internet access may also be in the future for Merit, but Myers cautioned that such issues must be examined with patience. "I think we all have a lot of work to deal with all the regulatory concerns and other issues" he explained. "To just slap a browser on a countertop will not work. You have to make it entertaining."

In addition to technological developments, countertops are also making inroads into locations not normally associated with the units. That is evidenced by the positive feedback Merit received about its countertop units at last year's Fun Expo.

"We have found people are putting those into other locations like pizza restaurants and some FECs," Myers said. "When push comes to shove, the machines can do a couple hundred dollars a week in a game room, and it only takes up four or five square feet."

So what accounts for the rapid growth in popularity of the countertop in recent years? "Frankly, I think we created a whole category of games," concluded Myers. "We have also created a loyalty and an understanding that Merit is committed to providing operators with new software for the countertop units."

(For more on countertops, turn to the special "Taking It To The Street" section inside this issue of Play Meter.)

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Operators continue fight to keep cigarette vending

In the wake of news reports that a tacit agreement between state attorneys general and the major tobacco companies would include a ban on cigarette vending machines, leading tobacco vending advocates have stepped up efforts to have their voice heard in Washington. Any agreement between the states and big tobacco would have to be approved by Congress.

"The top two priorities are working with Congress and maintaining good public relations on the issue," explained Mark Levine of Melo-Tone Vending in Somerville, Mass., who serves as co-chairman of the AMOA Tobacco Vending Committee along with Terry Davis of TD-Rowe in Houston. The two were scheduled to travel to Washington late last month to meet with members of Congress.

As part of the overall effort, AMOA's attorney in Washington fired off a letter to the architects of the settlement that read: "I strongly urge you to contact this firm before attempting to include settlement language that has an adverse impact on my clients. My clients will hold the participating parties liable for any action taken which adversely affects their rights."

Levine said AMOA was making a "full court press" in Congress to approve cigarette machines with lockout device in all locations, or at the least in age-restricted locations such as taverns. The third option, according to Levine, would be monetary compensation for lost revenue, which would be granted to some other industries affected by a major tobacco settlement. "We can see some light at the end of the tunnel, but the fight has just begun," he said. "We would consider any one of those three a win."

AMOA attorneys in Washington are also in the process of drafting a citizens petition requesting the Food and Drug Administration to amend regulations announced last year, and then later set aside pending review by the federal judiciary. The citizens petition appeal is being described as a safety precaution in case the regulations are upheld by the courts. The Aug. 28 implementation date is currently on hold for the FDA regulations.

In a letter to the general AMOA membership, Davis and Levine touted AMOA's accomplishments on the tobacco front over the last year, citing the association's rallying efforts that headed off a vending ban by the FDA last year.

"Also during the past 12 months members of the tobacco vending committee met with R.J. Reynolds to get them to reintroduce its vending program," the letter went on to say. "These efforts were successful and R.J.R. resumed its placement program which resulted in a direct $1.5 million benefit to AMOA members."

The bad news, according to AMOA's Tobacco Vending Committee, is these efforts have cost the association a significant amount of money, most of which has not been offset by efforts to raise $1 for every tobacco machine owned by an AMOA members. While the last official total was up to $12,000, the association estimates the total number of machines to be 350,000. According to AMOA figures, 80 percent of the machines are operated by association members.

To make a donation to AMOA's Tobacco Vending Committee, contact AMOA headquarters, 401 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60611-4267, (800)937-2662.

Nightclub & Bar returns to Orlando

The 22nd International Nightclub & Bar Expo, scheduled for Aug. 18-20 at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, Fla., is expected to mark the largest gathering in the United States for bar, club, tavern owners and operators, and other hospitality professionals.

"We expect this to be our largest show to date with more than 600 booths in the exhibit hall and nearly 8,000 in attendance from the United States and abroad," said show organizer and producer Ed Meek.

Dave "Big D" DeBusschere, one of basketball's all-time best defenders, will be this year's keynote speaker. The show also marks the debut of the Beer, Wine & Spirits Beverage Retailer Expo, held concurrently to target the off-premise market.

The three-day event will showcase a wide assortment of products and services available for both on- and off-premise operators. The show will also offer 45 seminars, panel discussions, and special presentations. Topics include supplier promotions, design and new lighting and sound equipment, DJ-related information, tips for controlling pouring costs, and profiting from coin-op machines and games.

One of the coin-op sessions, a panel discussion, will be led by Frank Seninsky of Alpha-Omega Amusements. Other sessions will deal with Internet games in bar locations. For more information, contact Kevin Seddon, (800)247-3881 or (601)236-5510; fax (601)236-5541; e-mail (ncb@nightclub.com).

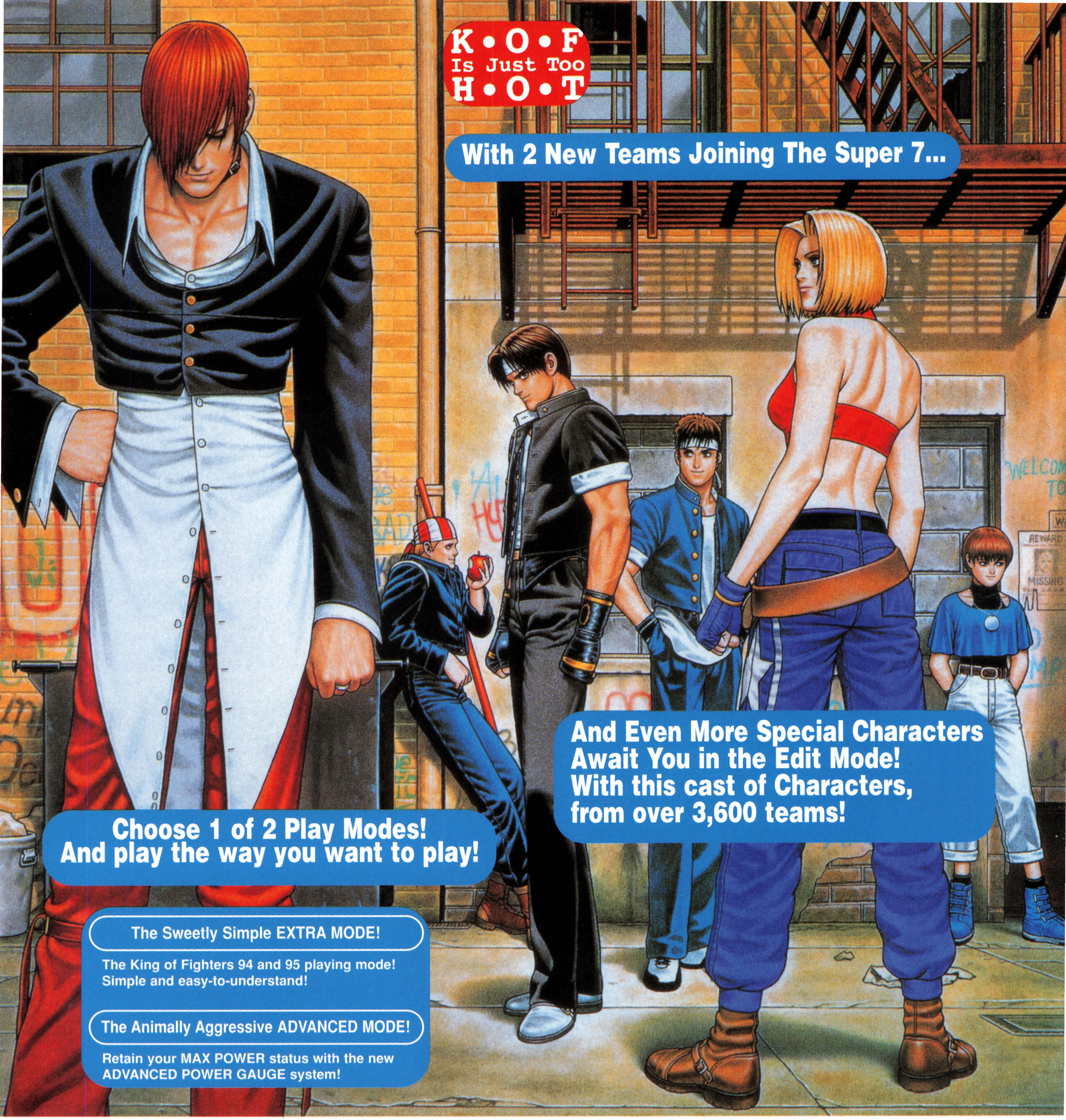
PAMMA to honor Arachnid's Bob Mills

The Pennsylvania Amusement and Music Machine Association, along with its supporters and members, will host an awards banquet to honor Bob Mills, vice president of sales and marketing at Arachnid, as its recipient of this year's Coin Man of the Year for 1997.

Held in conjunction with a golf outing in the mountains of western Pennsylvania at the Chestnut Ridge Golf Resort in Blairsville, the dinner will take place on Aug. 22.

"Bob is the kind of supporter that over the years has done more than his share of the volunteer work that gets overlooked and unappreciated," said PAMMA president Lou Larson. "There is no question that without Bob's commitment to the coin industry of Pennsylvania, we would not be in the shape we are today.

PAMMA annually holds an awards banquet, machine auction, and golf outing for its membership in the summer. For more information, call (717)232-5322.



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Happ joins with Immersion to develop arcade feedback

Immersion Corp., one of the leading developers of feel or force feedback technologies for PC peripherals, has entered into a strategic partnership with Happ Controls to integrate the former's I-Force hardware and software architecture with Happ's arcade-quality joystick and wheel controllers.

I-Force generates a simulated sense of tactile feel to joysticks, steering wheels, flight yokes, and other computer peripherals. The two parties say the result of this partnership will be arcade controllers that enable game players to feel simulated physical sensations that represent the gaming action.

"The relationship Immersion has forged with Happ is very exciting," said Immersion president Louis Rosenberg. "It takes our I-Force technology, already the standard for adding feel to home computing applications, and makes it accessible to arcade and location-based entertainment venues. This is great for software developers because once they support I-Force within a home gaming title, they can immediately port their code to the arcade and vice versa."

I-Force works by incorporating motors and sophisticated electronics into peripherals. Under the command of software, the motors push back against the user, simulating the feel of surfaces, liquids, textures, and scores of other physical phenomenon.

"This technology will allow for more interactivity between the player and the game," said Frank Happ, president of Happ Controls. "The I-Force technology will result in more exciting game play and far better income for operators of coin-operated arcade devices."

Immersion and Intel Corp. also recently announced a joint technology relationship wherein they will work together to bring enhanced feel to the PC through the emerging Universal Serial Bus Standard. Furthermore, support for Immersion's I-Force has been incorporated into Microsoft's DirectX API, facilitating integration of feel sensations into Windows game titles.

For more information, check out both companies' Web sites (http://www.force-feedback.com) and (http://www.happcontrols.com).

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Coin Quote

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$	FEC	Retail Store	Movie Theater	Mall
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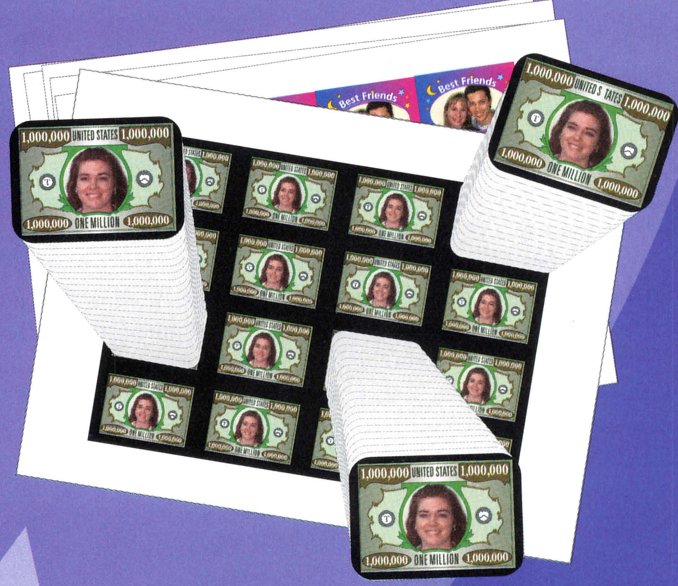
Week 3	$1209	$1064	$738	$1224
Week 4	$1323	$1136	$849	$1408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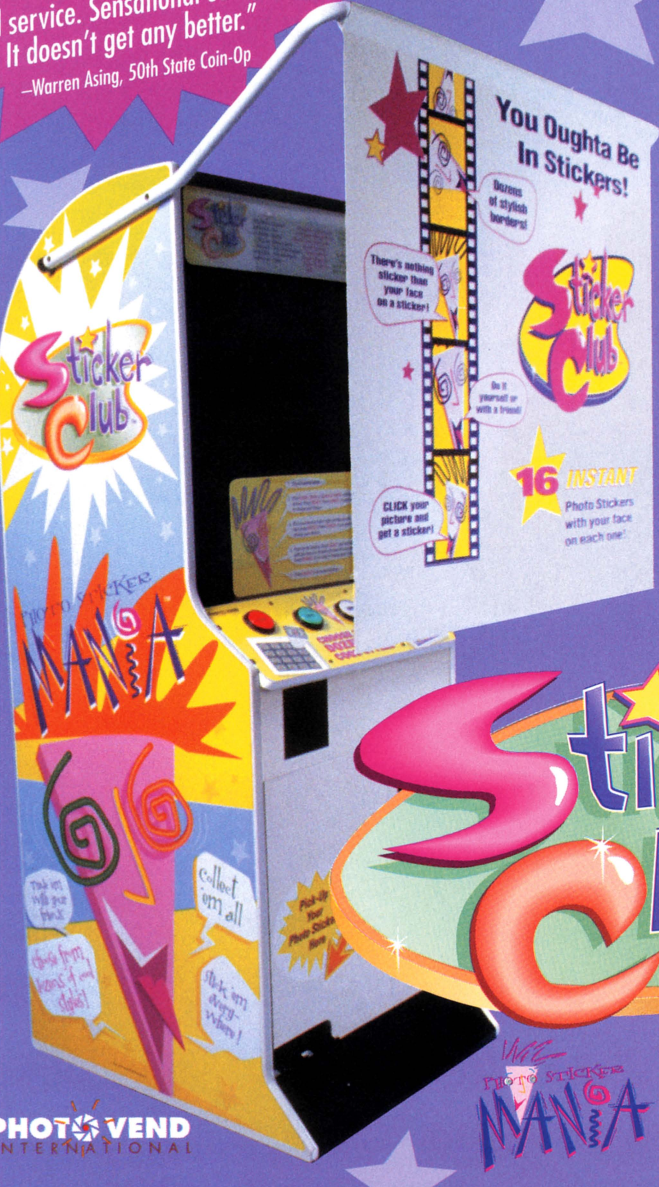
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Koala Corp. buys Delta Play Ltd.

Denver, Colo., -based Koala Corp. has acquired Delta Play Ltd., a privately owned manufacturer of children's modular play equipment, for approximately $4.7 million. Koala is a public company traded on NASDAQ.

"Delta Play will further establish us as a leading provider of products that help commercial organizations create family friendly atmospheres for their patrons," said Koala CEO Mark Betker.

"We are very excited about joining Koala," said Delta founder and CEO Dan Buchanan, who will retain his current role with the company which will be known as Delta Play Co. "We believe this will be a highly synergistic relationship and we look forward to capitalizing on the many opportunities that will result from the combination of our resources and contacts."

Delta Play designs, manufactures, and installs custom soft modular playgrounds for such venues as international restaurant chains, theme parks, water parks, family entertainment centers, shopping malls, and commercial, institutional, and residential applications. Koala develops, designs, manufactures, and markets child protection and children's activity products for commercial, institutional, and recreational establishments. Their Koala Baby Kare baby changing stations are installed in public restrooms in the United States and 20 other countries.

Paramount Parks chooses Lazer Runner as operator

Paramount Parks, the fourth largest amusement chain in the world, has chosen Lazer Runner to operate laser tag arenas in all of their parks. The company currently has laser tag systems in operation in 250 entertainment locations worldwide.

"It's great to have a system that is not only durable, but popular and profitable as well," said Paramount Parks operator Joe Mutter. "We couldn't be happier with the business."

With attendance at the park chain estimated at 12-1/2 million last year, Paramount Parks is seen as a powerhouse venue for Lazer Runner systems."This is a great opportunity that will open a lot of doors for us," commented Kenn Shureck, president of Ascension Productions which manufactures the Lazer Runner system.

What do You Call 2 Linked
San Francisco RUSH Extreme Racing
LEADER

Texas support praised by Play Meter's Fricke

Play Meter Legal Eagle columnist Tom Fricke, a St. Louis-based attorney specializing in legal issues relating to the amusement game business, expressed thanks recently to a number of players, both within and outside the Texas legislature, for their support in stopping an anti-redemption bill.

Supporters fell into four categories: members of the legal team, legislators, members of AMOT, and lobbyists. Attorneys who handled the matter included Ira Toblowsky and Faith Burke, both of whom worked tirelessly in their efforts to avoid the ill effects that the proposed law would have created.

Within the legislature, Fricke expressed gratitude to Sens. Jerry Patterson, John Carona, Eliot Shapleigh, Eddie Lucio, and Carlos Truman, as well as many supportive members of the state House.

AMOT members worthy of special note were Ross Todaro, secretary/treasurer Vancie Todaro, Joe Franz, and Vasrek Gregorian. Last, but certainly not least, on the thank you list were the association lobbyists: Bill Pewitt, Ike Harris, and John Heal.

AMOA Notre-Dame session slated for fall

A new session of AMOA's Notre Dame Executive Development Program for Continuing Education will be held Oct. 11-14 at the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Ind. This will be the first session for the new Group IX.

Designed for member owner/operators and distributor/suppliers, the program—patterned in part after Notre Dame's MBA program—is comprised of five two-and-a-half-day sessions held each spring and fall. The program gives attendees an opportunity to learn in a campus environment and exchange ideas with their peers.

Instructors come from the ranks of Notre Dame's teaching faculty. Since its creation in the mid-1980s, more than 200 individuals from AMOA members companies have graduated from the program.

Among the topics addressed over the course of five sessions: accounting, budgeting, business law, finances, employee communications, motivating employees, human resource management, marketing, organizational behavior, strategic planning, and taxation. Registration is $300 per person. Housing and transportation costs are additional.

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Club Disney plans its second location

Club Disney, the popular imagination-powered playsite that was introduced in February, will open a second location in West Covina, Calif., late this year marking the first expansion of Walt Disney Co.'s regional entertainment venture.

"Due to the success we have had in Thousand Oaks, we are proud to announce our next Club Disney location," said senior vice president and general manager Jay Rasulo. "We think our West Covina playsite will be an equally popular entertainment destination for families."

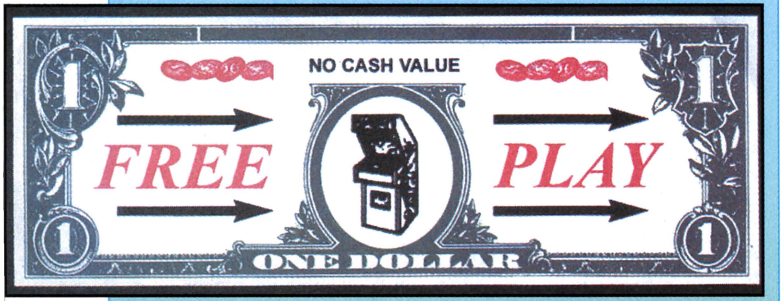
Rasulo said the Thousand Oaks location has exceeded all expectations and the company is committed to continued expansion of the concept. "The response we have received from families has been terrific," he explained. "We have also seen exceptionally strong interest in our themed birthday parties and school field trips."

Club Disney is an entertainment environment that offers play experiences for infants to 10-year-olds. Earlier this summer, the Thousand Oaks location celebrated the arrival of Disney's motion picture Hercules with a special summer promotion, The Hercules Pentathlon. Four-time summer visitors received a fifth visit free.

Special summer attractions included: Herc's Gym, where players are invited to dress up as the Greek god and go the distance; Hero Medals, in which patrons create their own hero medals; the Hercules Animated Storybook, an interactive computer activity transporting young customers to the world of myth and adventure; and the Hercules Hero Hurrah Party featuring celebration specialists who help turn children into true heroes during a party fit for the gods.

"The events we created for Hercules showcase the magical experience Club Disney offers our guests, as well as our commitment to provide unique and high-quality family entertainment," added Rasulo.

Quick Change



American Changer has introduced a free play coupon, developed as a promotional tool with endless applications for locations ranging from the largest family entertainment centers to the smallest local game rooms. Operators can set their American Changer machines to accept the personalized coupon and give out a set number of tokens.

As part of Holiday Inn's emphasis on electronic entertainment, a new public area concept called e.space was introduced last fall, which envisions the transformation of an existing space into a fun and relaxed themed environment for guests to enjoy.

Holiday Inn forms new machine services group

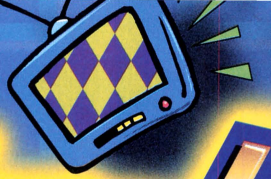
Holiday Inn Worldwide recently announced the creation of a central Machine Management Service Department. "The formation of this department shows our commitment to position electronic entertainment as an exciting option for hotel guests, and that means both business and leisure travelers," said Vicki Gordon, vice president of electronic leisure for Holiday Inn Worldwide and leader of the new group.

Gordon added that Holiday Inn is working closely with its sister company, Bass Leisure Machine Services (BLMS), which currently operates more than 64,000 machines in the United Kingdom and South Africa. BLMS, along with equipment manufacturer Barcrest Ltd., is part of Bass PLC's growing electronic entertainment division.

As part of the company's emphasis on electronic entertainment, a new public area concept called e.space was introduced last fall, which envisions the transformation of an existing space, such as a game room or lounge, into a fun and relaxed themed environment for guests to enjoy. The typical mix of attractions will include popular interactive video games, novelty machines, simulators, and more.

"E.space offers guests leading-edge electronic entertainment options in the hotel instead of having to leave the property and creates a more marketable space for the hotel operator," explained Gordon. "By showcasing the game equipment in a bright, attractive atmosphere, we create an inviting amenity that is much more welcoming to guests than the typical dark, poorly-ventilated game room found in many hotels."

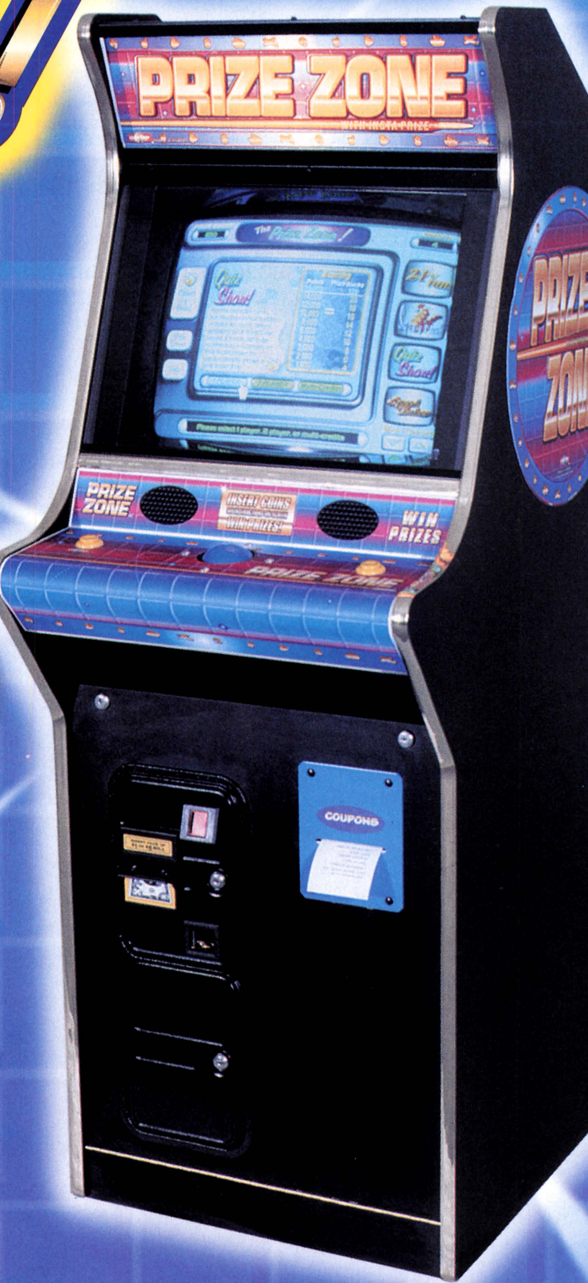
Holiday Inn originally test-marketed e.space in early 1996 and has now implemented the concept in 25 hotels around the world. The results have been impressive, generating amusement area revenue increases of 30 to 1,000 percent at hotels with such locations. The company plans to have 400 high-profile electronic entertainment offerings within its hotel system in the next five years. For more information, call vendor relations manager Darren Breese, (770)604-2669.



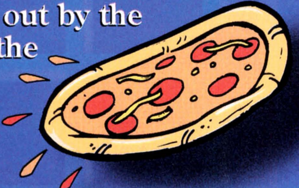
The Prize Zone!™

"Prize Games for Street Locations"

LAZER-TRON™



Prize Zone is the first multi-game prize machine for street locations. Players can play a variety of exciting skill games and acquire prize credits based upon how well they play. Prize credits are then exchanged for prizes programmed into the game. A coupon is printed out by the machine to be redeemed with the attendant.



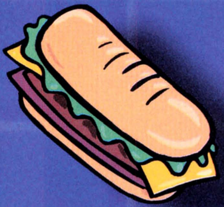
PRIZES: Up to 15 different prizes can be used. No merchandise counter is required. Most of the prizes can be the items that are already sold at the location, such as food and drinks. Payout %'s are completely adjustable.

GAMES: Prize Zone offers 7 exciting SKILL games. All games feature Progressive Jackpots and Insta-Prize.™ Insta-Prize is our patented feature that allows players to win large prizes on a single play. Prizes such as a TV or a pizza can be won, in one game, without exceeding desired payout.

CARD GAMES: Super Solitaire, 21 For Fun, Speed Poker and Super 11's.

TRIVIA GAMES: Quiz Show, a photo trivia game.

CLASSICS: Scud Attack and Squirms.



EASY TO USE:

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3) Start playing

FEATURES:

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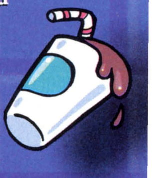


For more information contact: Lazer-Tron, 4430 Willow Road, Pleasanton, CA 94588 • Ph: (510) 460-0873 • Fax: (510) 460-0365

StrayLight VR systems headline second promo tour

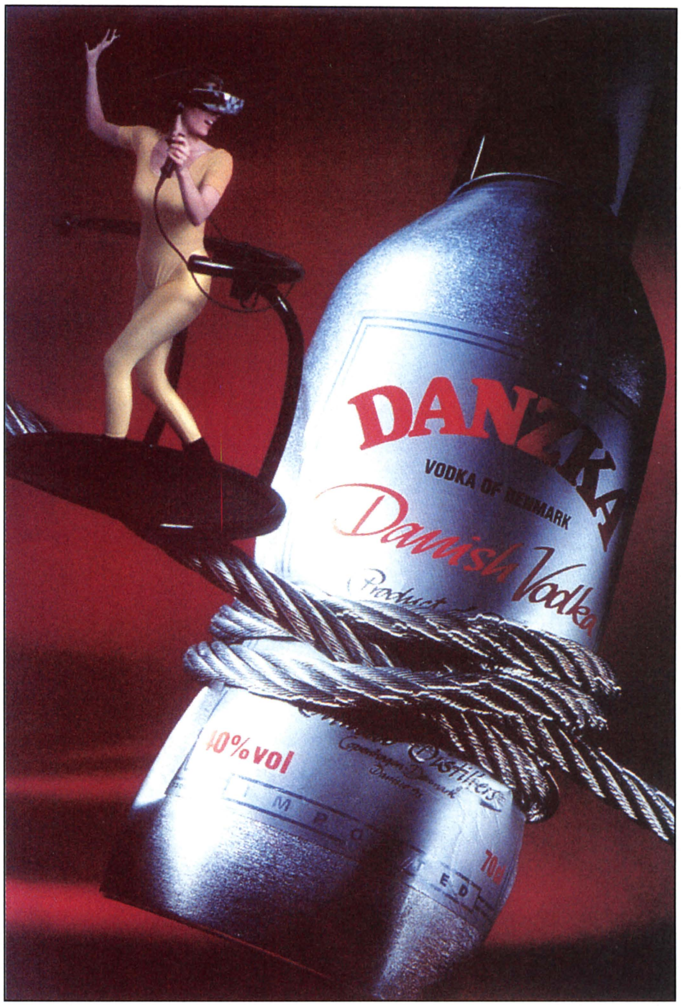
StrayLight Corp. of Warren, N.J., recently completed delivery of its second customized virtual reality system for Danisco Distillers. The unit will be used in a promotional tour for Danzka Vodka. The company's Virtual Reality 3D-XTC system was used last year and again this year to introduce the Danish vodka to Spain.

Through on-premise promotions held at various bars, clubs, and restaurants, the VR promotion helped increase brand awareness. The new system will be used to attract attention to Danzka Vodka in Mexico.

StrayLight's 3D-XTC system sends players inside a real-time, interactive 3-D computer generated world. Players don a head-mounted display and maneuver with a two-button hand controller to explore the virtual terrain.

StrayLight customized an existing virtual reality game with Danzka logos, product placements, and video clips to produce product impressions within a completely integrated promotional campaign. This allowed Danzka to save a significant amount in development costs.

In addition, the tour was able to visit locations of all sizes, due to the small footprint of the 3D-XTC system, less than 12 square feet. Because the systems are specifically designed for the promotions market, they are easily transportable and take less than 10 minutes to install and begin operation.



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CashCode introduces new universal bezel

In an effort to assist its customers in maintaining appropriate levels of inventory, Canadian-based bill validator manufacturer CashCode has created and introduced a new universal bezel for the amusement, bottling, gaming, lottery, transportation, and vending industries.

The new bezel can be mounted in either a stack down or stack up position and will continue to meet industry standards by using an eight-ear mounting format.

"We're responding to the needs of our customers and suggestions from the people who use our machines in making this change," explained CashCode's senior vice president of sales and marketing Val Levitan. "Although we will discontinue both our SD Bezel and SU Bezel, both our company and our customers believe they will have greater flexibility in managing their inventory of bill validators."

The move, according to the company, is the latest in a series of product and service improvements brought to market. CashCode has successfully expanded its business overseas and is looking to grow its market share in a number of United States and South American markets including amusement, transportation, and bottling. For more information, contact Paige Gamble, (800)250-9903, ext. 261.

AMOA offers non-member trade show pass for Expo `97

AMOA recently announced the introduction of a $60 per person trade show-only pass for non-association members. The pass will be good for all three days of the show. Current AMOA members receive complimentary registration allotments based on dues paid.

The new trade show pass is available at the $60 fee for pre-registrations received before Friday, Sept. 19. After that date and on-site, the pass is $75. The registration fee for non-member international attendees is free for pre-registrations received before Sept. 19; it is $50 after that date and on-site. For more information, contact AMOA, (800)937-2662.

The International Expo `97 will be held Oct. 23-25 at the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta, Ga. Program and registration materials have been sent out to industry members worldwide.

As of mid-July, more than 600 booths, or approximately 85 percent of the show floor, had been sold to nearly 200 companies. In addition, more than 60 percent of a booth area set aside for Developers Row—a show floor attraction featuring companies involved in game software development and other new industry technologies—has been sold to such companies as Microsoft, Intel, and GT Interactive Software.

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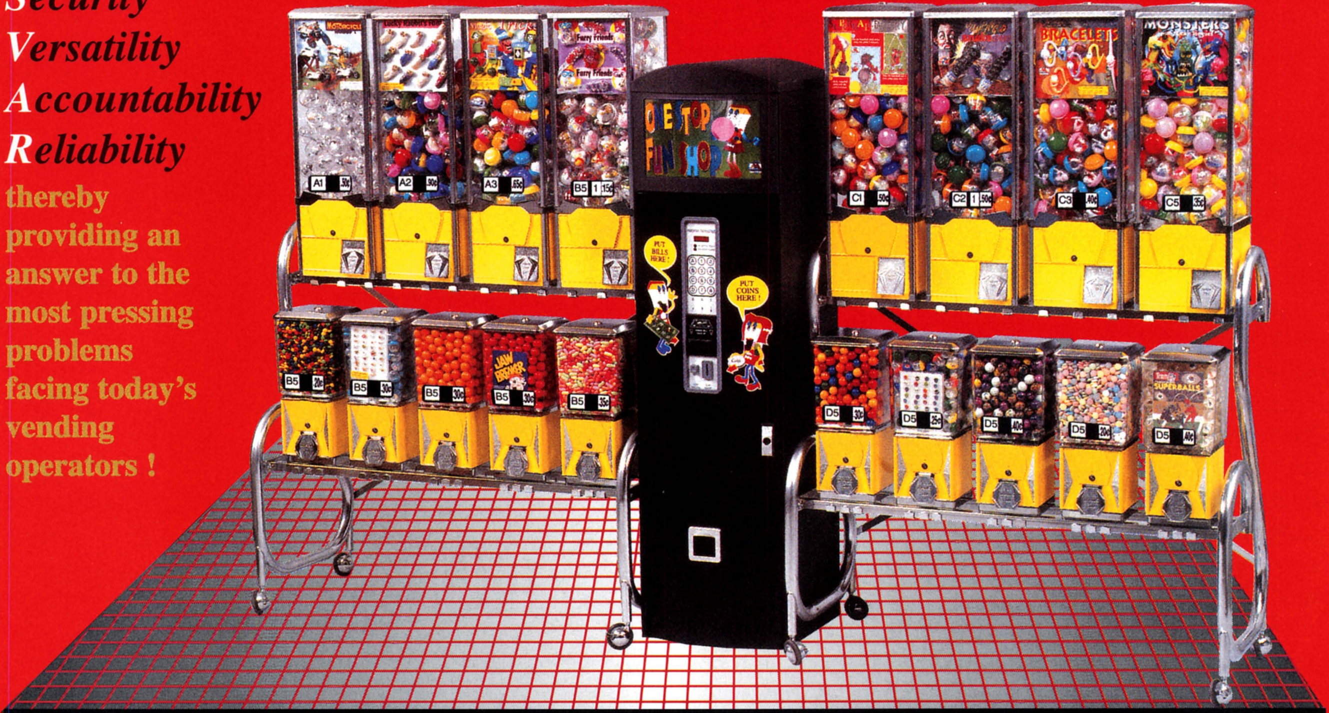

SECURITY

- 175lb. unit (not including attached racks) to prevent unit from being wheeled away.
- 13 gauge steel
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- Chicago Ace Lock with 30,000 combinations standard and can be upgraded with a 5,000,000 combination tubar lock
- Double door wall protector to prevent anyone from prying open the door
- Optional cash box & dollar bill lock available
- All money is secure in one central location - not every machine

VERSATILITY

- Adapts to all bulk vendors
- Accepts most U.S. bills ($1,5,10,&20) and most U.S. coins(05¢, 10¢, & 25¢)
- Can be programmed to any price from zero (free) up to $99.95 in .05¢ increments
- One control unit connects up to 32 machines
- Light box can be customized for any account
- All parts are easily accessible
- Can be adapted to accept most foreign currencies

ACCOUNTABILITY

- Standard non- resettable counter that counts
  - Total number of vends
  - Total number of dollars
- Optional accountability software which gives you total control over all aspects of your machine, route driver and products
- The software will report to you!
  - Total sales per machine, route and company
  - Complete sales analysis of each vendor
  - Discrepancy reports between machine sales and actual coin counts
  - Much, much more!!!

RELIABILITY

- Over 2 years of engineering and design
- Field tested electronics for over 12 months with 100% trouble free operations
- Electrical components have been used for the last 15 years in the soda and snack machine industry
- Electrical Mechanism senses metal content and weight & size of coin to guarantee no slugs or fake money
- All components use the latest technology with coin mechanism and validator multi drop bus technology; the industry standard for NAMA
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PARKWAY

Various Patents Pending
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Ortsa Products to redesign Round `N Round games

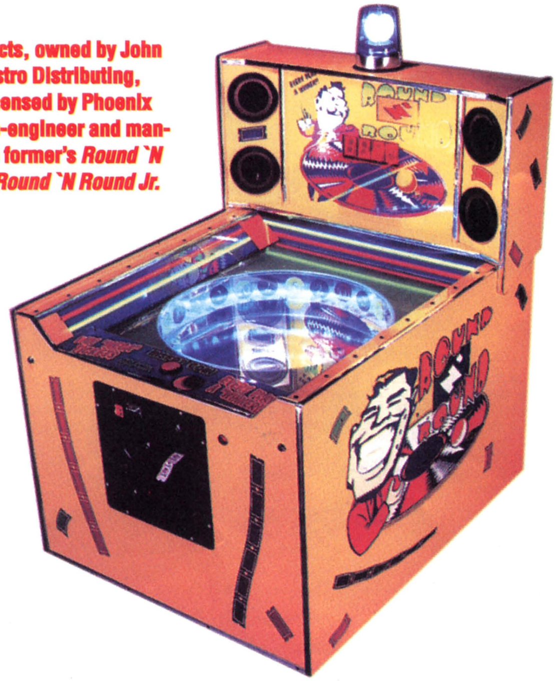
Ortsa Products has been licensed by Phoenix Games to re-engineer and manufacture the former's *Round `N Round* and *Round `N Round Jr.* Ortsa Products is owned by John Nelson of Astro Distributing.

"We knew *Round `N Round* could be an even bigger seller with some redesigning and re-engineering," explained Astro sales vice president Harry Chaplin. "We also had the field research and customer input to guide us."

A number of new features will make *Round `N Round* a true game of skill including: all new graphics and playfield, an oversized skill button for ball position control, new flashing rope lighting, bright chrome T-moldings, a durable textured finish, a new blitz black color in addition to the traditional yellow, a newly designed payout board, and powder coat paint and riveted paddles.

Astro has also introduced a new "30 days no questions" return policy. Said Nelson: "The *Round `N Round* has consistently been a popular profit producer and with the recent improvements combined with our 30-day guarantee you cannot lose. Buy it, locate it, return it if you are not satisfied for any reason."

In a recent skill test conducted by Astro, the ball stopped in the playfield within one second of the skill stop button being hit and the highest percentage of numbers hit were within three or four slots of the jackpot or on the jackpot. The test also found that repeated play brought players closer and closer to hitting the jackpot. For more information, contact Astro, (309)786-7066; fax (309)786-7067; e-mail (asstroman@aol.com).



Ortsa Products, owned by John Nelson of Astro Distributing, has been licensed by Phoenix Games to re-engineer and manufacture the former's *Round `N Round* and *Round `N Round Jr.*

One of the innovations being introduced at this year's Fun Expo is a complete Coin-Op Connection package including free exhibit hall passes for distributors, operators, and their top customers.

Fun Expo offers complete coin-op connection package

Helping business Adapt, Improve, and Motivate (AIM) for the future is the theme of this year's International Family Entertainment Center Show (better known as Fun Expo), and one of the innovations being introduced is a complete Coin-Op Connection package including free exhibit hall passes for distributors, operators, and their top customers; an enhanced regional referral and networking program; and targeted seminars designed to give industry professionals an advantage.

After registering at no cost for the trade show, distributors and operators may sign up for a program through which Fun Expo refers regional buyers to them as a source for free exhibit passes prior to the show. During the four-day gathering, a Coin-Op Connection booth will provide all attendees access to a database where they can obtain a printed list of operators and distributors for their region and arrange meetings on-site.

Seminars have also been revamped to meet the needs of operators and distributors, who reportedly prefer lower priced all-inclusive programs that they can attend or recommend to clients. A flat-rate Fun Pass allows full access to the trade show floor for three days plus 20 general industry seminars. Early registration is $35 for members of Fun Expo's sponsoring organization, the International Association of Family Entertainment Centers (IAFEC) or $55 for non-IAFEC members. On site registration is $75.

Of special interest to industry members will be the CoinOpdate, a 90-minute seminar providing the latest in information on how operators are using equipment and technology for increased profitability, as well as an update on NANI, the universal platform proposal, and the Internet.

Extreme fun is also on the schedule in Las Vegas as Fun Expo hosts a Wednesday night party at the New York New York Hotel & Casino with food at the Motown Cafe and "offshore" festivities at the Coney Island Emporium mega-arcade.

For more information, contact Bailey Beeken or Michelle Leberfeld, (914)993-9200; fax (914)993-9210.

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Golden 8 awards announced at VNEA

The Golden 8 Awards, renamed this year in honor of Valley chairman Chuck Milhelm to recognize his tremendous contributions to the Valley National Eight-Ball Association, were presented at this year's VNEA.

Winners of the 1997 Chuck Milhelm Golden 8 Award included:

First year charter holder sanctioning the highest number of players—Kelly Goins of Kelly Coin in Iowa (119), Vicky Strickland of Muncie Coin in Indiana (129), and Terry Davis of TD Rowe in Texas (364).

Charter holder recording the highest percentage increase in players—Kenny Price of Welch Music in West Virginia (290 percent), Bill Clark of Clark Vending in Ohio (307 percent), and Bruce McCaskill of Bannock Music in Idaho (498 percent).

Charter holder recording the highest number of players—Troy Tartaglio of Troy Vending in Arizona (247), Bruce McCaskill of Bannock Music in Idaho (249), and Steve Perrault of Amusement Systems in Ontario (257).

Charter holders sanctioning 5,000 league players for each of the last five years—Gary Nelson of Stansfield Vending in Wisconsin, Kevin Anderson of Twin States Music in Wisconsin, and Elmar Klapstein of Wal-Mac Amusement in Canada.

Florida state association elects officers for the year

At its annual general membership meeting held earlier this summer, the Florida Amusement Machine Association elected a new slate of officers for the coming year. The vote followed a morning breakfast furnished by Birmingham Vending.

The new officers are: president Bill Halperin of Florida Music in Palm Beach Gardens, first vice president Mark Bloom of Blueberry Hill Music in Orlando, second vice president Phil McBride of T & G Music in Titusville, and treasurer Joel Ford of Federal Vending in Boca Raton. Don Tunstall of BWB Newark in Orlando stepped down to hold the position of immediate past president.

Tunstall reported a good previous year for the association, holding their own in the legislative arena and supporting vending operators in ongoing tobacco issues. Halperin said he plans an aggressive approach to the legislature, hoping to achieve some tax relief.

"We have become more and more involved in the entire legislative process and have no intention of stopping the momentum that we have built up," Halperin said.

The meeting concluded with a lunch sponsored by BWB Newark with prize drawings for parts coupons and equipment furnished by Birmingham, Brady Distributing, Happ Controls, and Green Games. For more information on FAMA, contact Halperin, (561)774-3444.

AAMA teams up with sports figure to combat child abuse

"When it comes to family, kids shouldn't have to play defense." That's the message from all-star basketball player Tom Gugliotta of the Minnesota Timberwolves, who is depicted in a new public awareness poster designed to spread the word about child abuse prevention. Included in the poster are two basketball themed video games.

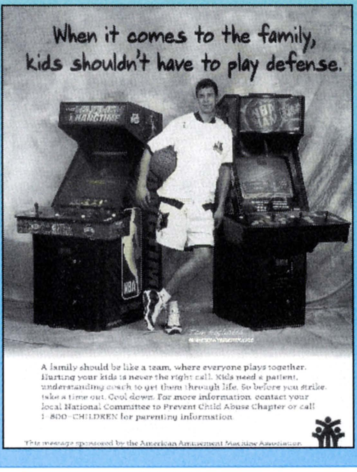
Recently released by the National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse (NCPCA), the poster was produced by AAMA. It is the latest in a series of posters featuring well-known celebrities designed to raise public awareness and promote positive relationships between parents and children.

AAMA is working to ensure that the message "hurting your kids is never the right call" is heard all across the nation with the most recent poster being distributed to schools, libraries, businesses, and youth-oriented organizations across the country by state chapters of NCPCA.

"Our business revolves around children and, therefore, there is no better project for us to focus on than to assist in the fight against child abuse," explained AAMA president Mike Rudowicz. "AAMA is proud to be associated with this organization, and we hope that our efforts assist in reducing the incidence of child abuse in this country."

In honor of Gugliotta's efforts, a special presentation will take place next fall prior to a Timberwolves' home game. Gugliotta marks AAMA's ninth collaboration with NCPCA. Previous poster spokespeople included Frank Thomas, John Madden, Nolan Ryan, Jackie Joyner-Kersee, Bo Jackson, and Patrick Ewing.

AAMA has teamed up with the National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse to produce an awareness poster featuring Tom Gugliotta of the Minnesota Timberwolves.


When it comes to the family, kids shouldn't have to play defense.
HANGTIME
NBA

A family should be like a team, where everyone plays together. Hurting your kids is never the right call. Kids need a patient, understanding coach to get them through life. So before you strike, take a time out. Cool down. For more information contact your local National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse Chapter or call 1-800-CHILDREN for parenting information.

This message sponsored by the American Amusement Machine Association.

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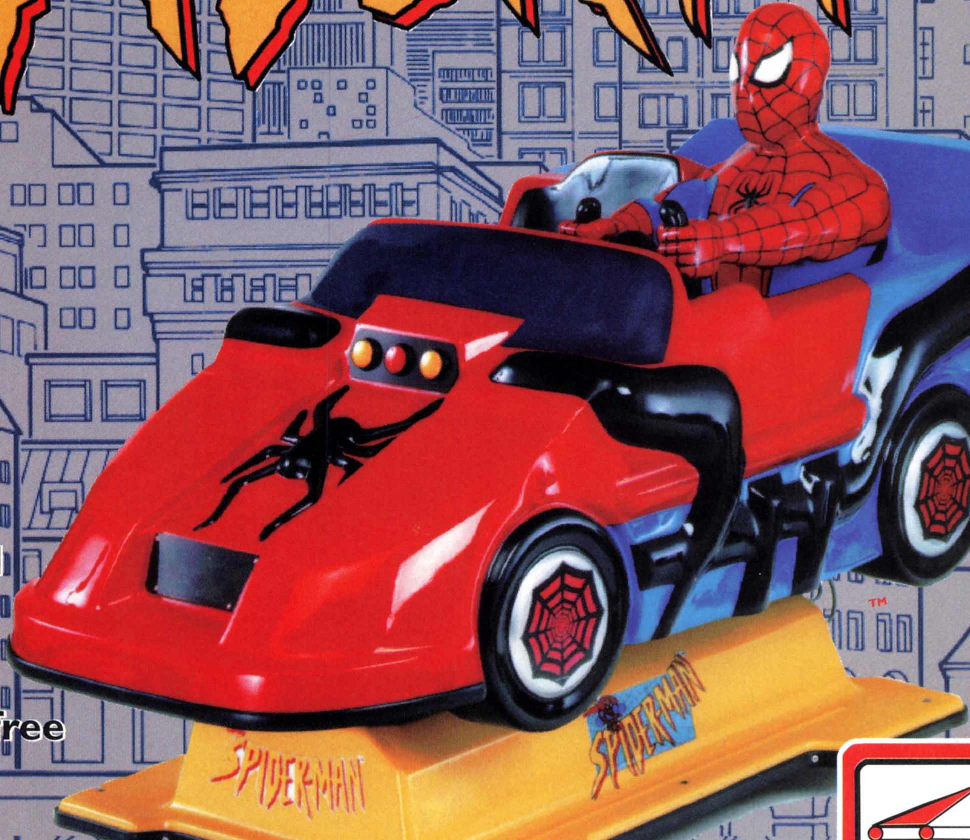

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AMOA announces award nominees

AMOA recently announced the nominees for awards in both its jukebox and games categories. The awards were sent out last month to the general membership for a vote, and the winners will be named in October at the Expo `97 banquet.

Here are the nominees:

AMOA 1997 Jukebox Award Nominees

JB Pop Single of the Year:

Because You Loved Me by Celine Dion (550 Music)
Change the World by Eric Clapton (Reprise)
Every Day Is a Winding Road by Sheryl Crow (A&M)
Give Me One Reason by Tracy Chapman (Elektra)
Wannabe by Spice Girls (Virgin)

JB Country Single of the Year

Blue by LeAnn Rimes (Curb)
Every Light in the House by Trace Adkins (Capitol)
Guys Do It All the Time by Mindy McCready (BNA)
Little Bitty by Alan Jackson (Arista)
Strawberry Wine by Deana Carter (Capitol)

JB R & B Single of the Year

Cupid by 112 (Arista)
Killing Me Softly by The Fugees (Ruffhouse)
I Believe I Can Fly by R. Kelly (Jive)
Twisted by Keith Sweat (Elektra)
Unbreak My Heart by Toni Braxton (LaFace)

JB Pop CD of the Year

Bring Down the Horse by The Wallflowers (Interscope)
Falling Into You by Celine Dion (550 Music/Epic)
New Beginning by Tracy Chapman (Elektra)
Sheryl Crow by Sheryl Crow (A&M)
Tragic Kingdom by No Doubt (Trauma/Interscope)

JB Country CD of the Year

Blue by LeAnn Rimes (Curb)
Borderline by Brooks & Dunn (Arista)
Did I Shave My Legs for This by Deana Carter (Capitol Nashville)
Everything I Love by Alan Jackson (Arista)
The Woman in Me by Shania Twain (Mercury)

JB R&B CD of the Year

Another Level by Black Street (Interscope)
Baduizm by Erykah Badu (Universal)
Keith Sweat by Keith Sweat (Elektra)
Secrets by Toni Braxton (LaFace)
Space Jam by various artists (Warner Sunset/Atlantic)

JB Latin CD of the Year

Y Sus Canciones by Vicente Fernandez
Juntos Para Siempre by Los Mismos
En Pleno Vuelo by Marco Antonio Solis
Vivir by Enrique Iglesias

Rising Star Award (Male)

Trace Adkins (Capitol)
Beck (Geffen)
Johnny Lang (A&M)
Kevin Sharp (Asylum)
Corey Stevens (Discovery)

Rising Star Award (Female)

Erykah Badu (Universal)
Deana Carter (Capitol)
Paula Cole (Imago)
Jewel (Atlantic)
LeAnn Rimes (Curb)

Rising Star Award (Group)

Hanson (Mercury)
No Doubt (Trauma/Interscope)
Spice Girls (Virgin)
Wallflowers (Interscope)
The Verve Pipe (RCA)

Jukebox Legend (Living)

Neil Diamond
Mick Jagger
George Jones
Paul McCartney
Rod Stewart

Jukebox Legend of the Past

Sam Cooke
Jim Croce
Bing Crosby
Janis Joplin
Jim Morrison

AMOA 1997 Game Award Nominees

Most Played Video Game (Dedicated)

Area 51 (Atari)
Cruis'n World (Midway)
Cruis'n USA (Midway)
Daytona USA (Sega)
Peter Jacobsen's Golden Tee 3D Golf (Incredible Technologies)

Most Played Pinball Game

Addams Family (Williams)
Attack From Mars (Williams)
Junk Yard (Williams)
Scared Stiff (Williams)
Theatre of Magic (Williams)

Most Played Conversion Kit

Area 51 (Atari)
Golden Tee 3D Golf 97 (Incredible Technologies)

continued on page 38

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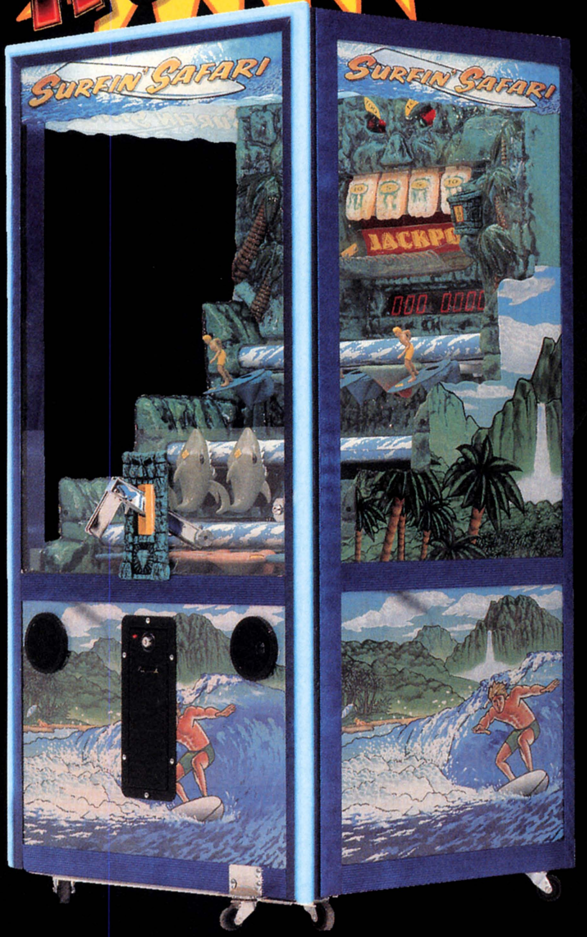

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AWARD NOMINEES

continued from page 36

- Peter Jacobsen's Golden Tee 3D Golf (Incredible Technologies)
- Police Trainer (P&P Marketing)
- Tekken 3 (Namco)

Most Played New Technology

- Alpine Racer (Namco)
- Megatouch XL (Merit)
- Peter Jacobsen's Golden Tee 3D Golf (Incredible Technologies)
- Sega Super GT (Sega)
- San Francisco Rush (Atari)

Most Played Redemption Skill Game

- Cracky Crab (Namco)
- Full Court Frenzy (I.C.E.)
- Hoop It Up (Atari)
- Skee-Ball (Skee-Ball)
- Spider Stompin' (Island Design)

Most Played Prize Dispensing Game

- Betson Big Choice Crane (H. Betti Industries)
- Candy Crane (Smart Industries)
- Clean Sweep (Smart Industries)
- LAX Rotary Merchandiser (Noel Industries)
- Smart Crane (Smart Industries)

Most Played Fast Action Redemption Game

- Big Haul (Benchmark)
- Cyclone (I.C.E.)
- Cyclone Jr. (I.C.E.)
- Smokin' Token (Seidel)
- Wheel `Em In (Bromley)

Most Innovative Dart Game

- Galaxy by Arachnid
- IQ Darts by Valley
- Scorpion 9000 by Merit
- Spectrum by Medalist

Operator's Choice Pool Table

- Dynamo's Top Brass Pool Table
- Great American Recreation's Pool Table
- Valley's Cougar ZD-6 Pool Table

Most Innovative Jukebox

- NSM Wallbox
- Rock-Ola Sybersonics Legend
- Rowe Venus Laserstar CD 100
- Wurlitzer Rainbow

Most Popular Other Game

- Comet Pool by Dynamo
- Dynamo's Air Hockey
- Dynamo's Foosball
- Tornado's Air Hockey by Valley
- Tornado's Foosball by Valley

Star Wars Trilogy pinball offered for handicapped

Sega Pinball Inc. recently donated a new *Star Wars Trilogy* sip-n-puff pinball to the Shriners Hospital in St. Louis, Mo. These specially modified games allow quadriplegics to blow into a computerized air pressure command tube, similar to how they drive their wheelchairs, to play the game.

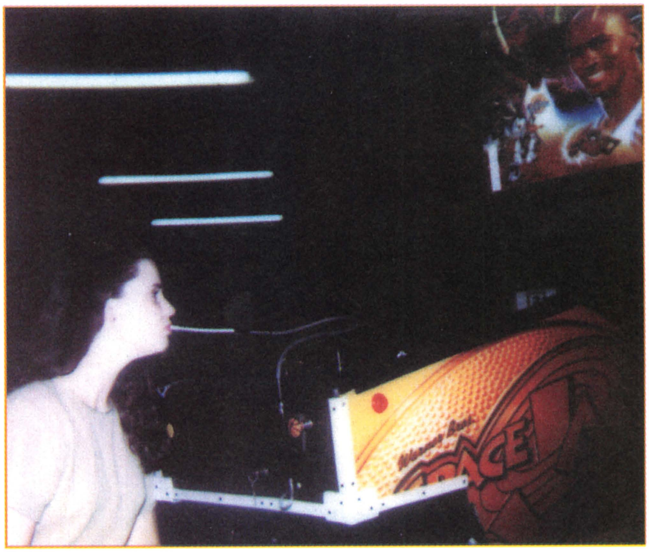
The company has delivered two other such specially designed games: an *Independence Day* game to Mike McDermott in the Chicagoland area and a *Space Jam* pinball for Christopher Reeve.

These games were developed by Joe Kaminkow, executive vice president of design; Neil Falconer, director of software; and Michael Toler, computer systems engineer. The special tubing and bracketry is made by the Terafin Co. and then designed into an interface unit created by Sega Pinball.

"The desire to do it is all it took," said Kaminkow. "It feels so good to affect someone's life in such a positive way."

Jolly Backer, North American sales and marketing manager, is in the process of contacting many different medical organizations and charities about this product. "We want to do something entertaining for some people who are not as fortunate as others," said Backer.

Sega Pinball is currently shipping its current game, *The Lost World: Jurassic Park*, with actor Jeff Goldblum providing custom speeches that direct the player through the game. "The art package on this game is absolutely stunning, incorporating our four-color playfield process along with a giant T-Rex jumping out at you from the backglass, which also comes in an optional 3-D version," added Kaminkow.



A patient tries out the new *Star Wars Trilogy* sip-n-puff pinball donated to the Shriners Hospital in St. Louis, Mo.

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Newly redesigned and engineered by Astro Distributing under license from Phoenix Games and Amusements. The new Round 'N Round will be the focal point of any game area or room.

The new and improved Round 'N Round features:

- ***All new graphics and playfield***
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- ***Virtually no maintenance***
- ***Oversize skill stop button for more control***
- ***New flashing rope lighting (no neon)***
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- ***New design payout board***
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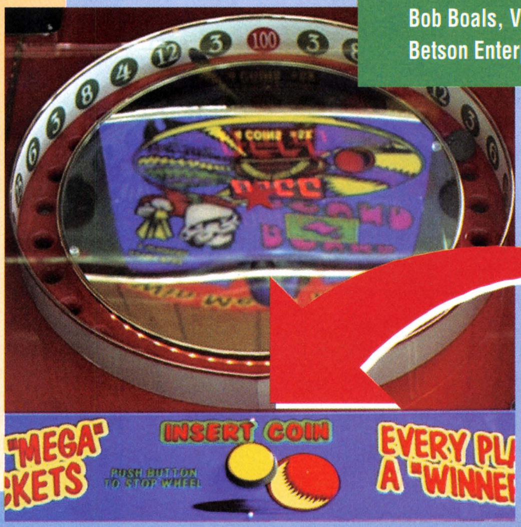

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Amusement Industry Expo scheduled for October

The Amusement Industry Expo, sponsored by a number of industry trade groups, is on tap for Oct. 28-30, at the I-X Center in Cleveland, Ohio. New this year are a lineup of seminars and workshops representing a cross section of current amusement industry requirements and trends.

Some of the topics covered include: Cooking Up Profits with Ribs, Marketing Your Event, How to Layout a Food Trailer, How to Layout a Game Trailer, Amusement Industry Rental Equipment Owners Roundtable, and a Common Sense Approach to the Pizza Industry.

Show floor hours will be 11 a.m.- 6 p.m. the first two days and 11 a.m.-3 p.m. on the final day. Special events include a kick-off breakfast, National Independent Concessionaires Association cocktail reception, Outdoor Amusement Business Association party, spouse/guest program, and a trip to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

Trade show attendees will get a peek at the latest in rides and equipment, living quarters and office trailers, food and game trailers, as well as the hottest in food and food equipment and novelty, midway, and arcade games. For more information, contact Amusement Industry Expo, P.O. Box 2188, Zanesville, Ohio 43702-2188; fax (614)452-2552.

Have You HEARD?

◆ **Creative Electronics and Software Inc.'s** (CES) newly released *Trap Shoot Classic,* the latest in the company's line of interactive wall-mount games, comes with a one-year warranty and includes a wireless remote control with a range of more than 100 feet. For more information, contact CES, 650 Sundown, South Elgin, IL 60177; (847)695-0023; fax (847)695-0483.

◆ **The World Gaming Congress & Expo '97** will be held Oct. 14-16 at the Las Vegas Convention Center with an expected attendance of 21,000 from 80 countries including executives in the casino, lottery, pari-mutuel, and allied industries.

◆ **Members of the Illinois Coin Machine Operators Association** gathered last month at the Hyatt in Lisle, Ill., for their annual meeting themed around "Keeping You On The Road To Success." Speakers at the Saturday meeting included Microsoft's Jason Robar, Eagle Software Corp.'s Dave DeGroot, and AMOA president Jerry Derrick.

◆ **Wells-Gardner** released its new 27-inch VGA presentation monitor at the Infocomm show in Los Angeles earlier this summer. The company expects to begin shipping the product during the third quarter of this year. Wells-Gardner also recently announced an order of 880 units of a 16x9 VGA platform to Silicon Gaming of California.

◆ **Paradigm Entertainment**, which originated as a division of Paradigm Simulation, confirms that it will release Aero Fighters Assault for the Nintendo 64 system in late summer or early fall. Also scheduled for consumer release later this year are a racing/driving game and another flight simulation game.

◆ **GameTech '97**, a new conference on strategic computing for the gaming industry, will take place at Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas, Aug. 12-14. The event will feature three educational tracks, two keynote addresses, and a plenary session.

◆ **Kids Quest**, which owns and operates a total of 75 children's entertainment centers across the United States, has signed a contract with the Canadian-based Vivid Group for the purchase of a minimum of seven of the latter's unencumbered Mandala VR Systems. The decision was based on positive response to a Vivid unit placed by Kids Quest at the Station Casino in Kansas City.

◆ **Play-By-Play Toys & Novelties** has completed a $15 million private placement of convertible debentures that will mature in seven years, pay an interest rate of eight percent monthly, and are convertible at $17 into Play-By-Play common stock. "The proceeds from this transaction will provide the company with the working capital necessary to support our rapidly expanding international operations, our high growth domestic retail lines...as well as pay debt," said company president Mark Gawlik. "We believe this mezzanine financing structure is very good for Play-By-Play and its shareholders."

◆ **A proposal to tax** the commercial activities of Indian Nations at a rate of 34 percent was defeated in the U.S. House Ways and Means Committee by a vote of 22-16.

◆ **A law passed by the Lousiana Legislature** banning Internet gambling was amended in conference before a final vote, focusing the bill's language strictly on computers connected to the Internet. A broadly written early draft raised concerns that it might inadvertantly outlaw skill tournaments utilizing a computer in any way. ▲

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FROM LEFT FIELD

STREET OPERATORS provide inspiration for the future

"Man, if you got to ask you'll never know."
Louis Armstrong

What lies at the heart of success? Maybe the answer is not as cryptic as Satchmo's when asked, "What is jazz?" But certainly it's not as banal as the words found in self-help manuals lining the shelves of our local bookshops. If it was, well, it wouldn't be success because everyone would have the answer.

Successful people may be able to put into words what contributed to their achievements, but one's core nature is often inexpressible or demonstrable only in their pure drive to forge ahead despite the inevitable challenges of life.

As our industry forges ahead through its own challenges, there is much skepticism—sometimes even cynicism—about the fate of street operators, the members of the industry who have been our core readers for more than 23 years. While I am no Karnac able to divine the future, two operators I interviewed for our Taking it to the Streets issue this month leave me with abundant reason for hope.

In the first instance, I was fortunate to get the chance to conduct the Coinman interview and chose an industry friend, Charles Rowland of Games People Play in Richmond, Va., as my victim—mainly because he always has a wealth of intelligent things to say about the ongoing evolution of the business.

In discussing the issue of price per play, Charles brought into focus the key challenge facing street operators today: "The games that we buy have to be of an entertainment value so people want to spend money, and we have to be able to price them at a level where people feel it's a value and yet we can still make the payments."

Sounds simple, but there are complex theories of economic philosophy and insights into human nature built into that statement, which is really the centerpiece idea of the whole industry.

He went on to say that despite dire predictions for the industry's future, street operators will continue to play a significant role as long as they continue to entertain people at a price range they are willing to pay. "Basically, for the last 60-some years our job has been selling inexpensive entertainment," he said.

Not surprisingly, Charles is himself an embodiment of this type of ingenuity. He has been a leading innovator among operators in utilizing the Susan B. Anthony dollar in almost all of his locations, including many traditional street locations, and forging new ground in location splits. Having worked in the computer industry for a number of years while operating on the side, he struck out on his own in 1985 and his story is one of unqualified success from the standpoint of integrity and independence.

Tom Oxtoby of Three Point Redemption and Tri-Vend Inc. in Springfield, Ill., is another example of the wealth of ingenuity found among street operators. In Tom's case, he has turned candy cranes with declining revenues into money makers as skill cranes vending small plush and novelty items.(For more, turn to "Scoring Success.") Where did he come up with the idea? On his own, drawn from previous challenges he faced as a street operator.

While it's not possible to quantify the innovativeness of these two examples in order to ensure the success of others, they can certainly be held up as inspirations for our present and our future.

Beyond that, maybe the only explanations we are left with are ambiguous sentiments not unlike Louis Armstrong's or the Chinese fortune I received recently: "A man's character is his destiny." ▲

Steve White
Associate Editor

It's Brand New...

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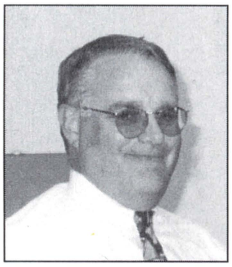
WHO'S NEWS

John Margold



Bill Treger

John and Sue Barone

Fred Newton received a warm send-off on his last day at Smith, Bucklin.

John Margold has been appointed vice president of sales and marketing for TouchTunes Digital Jukebox Inc., the Canadian manufacturer of a new jukebox that plays music without CDs or vinyl records. According to TouchTunes officials, the company is the first digital jukebox producer to clear the necessary licensing requirements with the Jukebox Licensing Office and five of the major record companies. TouchTunes units are currently testing in 20 U.S. cities.

Margold was most recently senior vice president at NSM America. His career includes a post as director of sales and marketing for Betson Enterprises and a term at Rowe International's Dedham, Mass., distribution office.

Margold commented, "In my 20-plus years in the coin-op industry I have never seen a more promising or exciting product and I am thrilled to be in on the ground floor." He can be reached at (888)338-JUKE(5853), or e-mail (Jukepro@aol.com).

Bill Treger has joined Technical Casino Services as director of business development and government affairs. He will be based in the TCS Las Vegas office, (702)798-0500. TCS, which is headquartered in England, also has offices in Atlantic City, Australia, and Spain. Treger was most recently with Casino Data Systems. His career includes government relations posts at Atronic Casino Gaming and H. Betti Industries, plus service as a state regulator in New Jersey.

Fred Newton has left Smith, Bucklin and his post as communications manager for AMOA to open his own business, Agate Force, a shop specializing in music, magazines, postcards, books, and other materials. If you are in the Windy City, stop by to see Fred at 3341 N. Lincoln Ave., or call (773)529-1383; e-mail (info@agateforce.com). During his 19-1/2 year career with Smith, Bucklin (12 with AMOA) Fred has been a good friend of the coin-op industry trade press—reliable, accessible, and professional. He has endured through several internal regimes and numerous AMOA presidents.

How does Fred sum up his AMOA years? "It was definitely interesting, and a learning experience. I developed a fondness for jukeboxes and an appreciation for what coin machine operators do for a living and the services they provide. These are small businessmen who do something big companies can never do. That's their strength."

While we will miss Fred's cool-headed commentary and his presence at those hectic shows, we welcome aboard his successor, **Nan Hallock** of Smith, Bucklin, whose appointment Fred endorses heartily. Nan has been with the management firm for seven years and especially enjoys working on commercial accounts. Said Nan: "I'm delighted and excited about working with AMOA, which has always been a favorite here at headquarters."

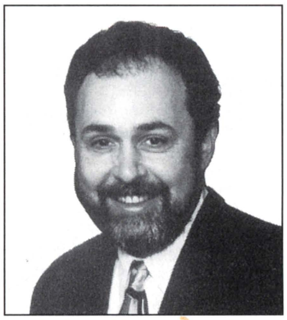
John Barone has been named executive vice president for SNK Corp. of America. **Sue Barone** has also joined the company as general manager. Both John and Sue were with SNK in the late '80s and early '90s. They can be reached at SNK's San Jose, Calif., office, (408)286-6270.

A & A Co./Parkway Machine Corp. has expanded its flat vending division and appointed **Adam Ippolito** to take control of product development and licensing new stickers and tattoos for the division. Ippolito has nearly 10 years of experience in the vending industry.

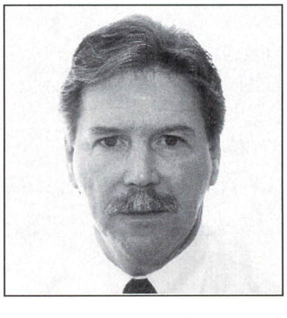
This new division will operate out of the company's A & A North office in College Point, which has expanded to over 15,000 square feet to accommodate the addition. Ippolito also will take over as manager of A & A North, succeeding Philip Brilliant, who now heads West to open the company's newest facility. To contact Ippolito, call (410)252-1020.

Robert Weiss has been promoted to director of manufacturing for Namco America. He will be responsible for engineering, purchasing, customer service, quality, and manufacturing. Weiss joined Namco America in 1996 as engineering manager. He was previously at Atari Games in R & D and also owned several companies. Stated Kevin Hayes, president of Namco America: "Namco is pleased to have an industry veteran running manufacturing. His wide experience in the coin-op industry will be beneficial to Namco." Weiss can be reached at (408)383-3950.

Donna Christich has joined the staff of Capcom Coin-Op at its Sunnyvale, Calif., office, (408)774-0500. Christich is well-known in industry circles due to her past tenure as marketing coordinator at Sega. ▲



Adam Ippolito



Robert Weiss

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BEYOND THE PLAYFIELD

❶

❷

❸

❹

Kudos to the marketing team at Bamboola, the FEC featured in our July issue (see pp. 78-80). Bamboola is an indoor/outdoor interactive edutainment center for kids between the ages of two and 12 and their parents, where learning comes through play. Interactive cooking classes are among the unique activities offered at Bamboola. Hands-on cooking discoveries include tortilla art, constructing banana boats, building ice cream sundaes, making pizza, and baking cookies, cupcakes, and pies from scratch. A variety of birthday party packages are available: Adventure Party, Create & Play Party, Island Party, and Bamboola Blast. All have different elements, yet each includes the basics of tokens, ice cream cake, pizza and soft drinks, invitations, plates, and napkins, private party hut, party host or hostess, and free coupon for the birthday child's next visit.

❶ **Millennium Amusement Group** recently installed its new Fire Rescue Boat system at the Six Flags over Georgia theme park. Over 1,500 plays were recorded at $1 each on the first day and on the following Saturday there were 1,680 plays on the 12-unit system. For the first time a $1 bill acceptor was incorporated along with a coin acceptor. From 1 p.m. to 8 p.m. the system ran at capacity, averaging about 200 plays per hour according to Millennium CEO Richard DeVuono. The boats are equipped with player-activated water cannons that give players the ability to squirt each other, which adds to player appeal and revenue. A 12-unit Blackbeard's Pirate Ship system is being installed next.

❷ **Ryan Vending of Victoria,** British Columbia, has not one but two game rooms aboard the Spirit of Vancouver Island vessel in the BC Ferries fleet that travels the British Columbia coastline daily. Here players enjoy videos and pinballs during the 90-minute crossing from Vancouver to Victoria.

Collectors take note: Classic Shows is sponsoring two Orlando Collectors Expos at the Orlando Florida Fairgrounds: Oct. 18-19 and Nov. 22-23, 8 a.m.-11 a.m. Among the items featured at the events are antique jukeboxes, movie posters, pinball machines, books, neon signs, gumball machines, and other nostalgic collectibles and decorations. For more details, call (904)928-0666 or e-mail (ClassicShows@USA.Net).

❸ ❹ **Konami America's** recent hospitality suite in Chicago was the occasion to debut both the hang gliding simulator *Hang Pilot* and the shooting game *Total Vice*. Pictured: right, l-r: Matt Davison of American Coin, Jim Niblock of Canadian Coin, Marc Raymond of Laniel Automatic, and Darren Decatoire of Konami sample *Total Vice*; left: Jerry Janda of New Way Sales tries his hand at *Hang Pilot*. ▲

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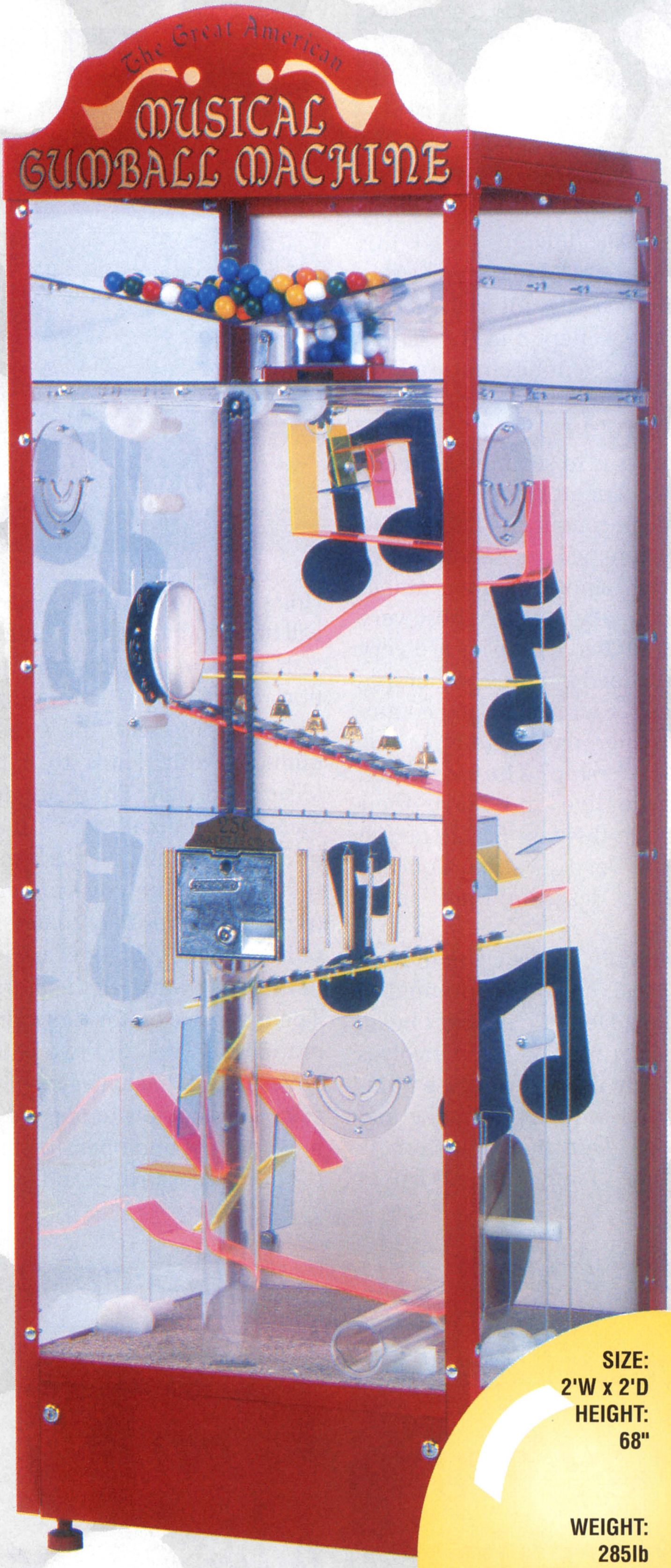

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EYE ON
ASIA

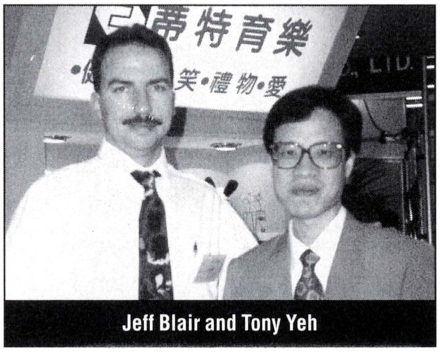
JEFF **BLAIR** and TONY **YEH**

Hong Kong's
RETURN

As you sit down to read this month's issue of Play Meter, Hong Kong will have already returned to the People's Republic of China (P.R.C.). This event has captured the attention of the entire world during the first half of 1997.

The focus is to see how a society such as the one in Hong Kong, with its booming economy and democratic free system, will be handled once back in the hands of a government that traditionally opposes those very traits. These two countries are very different indeed in terms of their political views. Can Hong Kong continue its prosperous ways under this type of leadership? The six million people who live and make their livelihood in this fascinating nation ponder this very question. Concern may better describe their sentiments.

We certainly do not claim to have a crystal ball, nor do we pretend to assume how Hong Kong might be in, say, a year or so. This issue involves far too many factors for these humble columnists to try to make any predictions. Our main concern is what effect, if any, the return of Hong Kong to the P.R.C.'s leadership will have on the amusement industry.


Jeff Blair and Tony Yeh

Hong Kong has a strong population relative to its tight boundaries. This, coupled with the strong economic wealth, lends to a healthy leisure industry. There are approximately 400 arcades or fun centers on the island, all of which are tightly regulated by the government. Contrary to how this may sound, owners of these establishments are in favor of the close watch of the authorities. The main reason for the good cooperation between the two is that the government has always had very clear rules on how to operate amusement games, and operators are able to follow these rules and still make money. This keeps the market in good order and maintains a healthy relationship for all those involved.

However, let's not blow the amusement industry in Hong Kong out of proportion! Overall, the market there is pretty small by the usual standards. The fact is that there is very little space for the industry to expand. The sprawling fun centers that are so popular in the United States just wouldn't fit in Hong Kong—both literally and economically. Consider this: some of the most expensive real estate in the world is in Hong Kong. Private, detached homes are very rare—only 187 on the entire island! A 10-bedroom home recently featured on an evening news program was purchased for $70 million! Albeit, it did have a view second to none. Interested in a two-bedroom apartment on the Kowloon side? A mere $350,000 moves you right in, and with a little renovation you'll have an adequate place to live.

Commercial property is equally as expensive so most arcade owners opt for smaller locations to contain expenses. This works well, though, because basically there are only two types of amusement games allowed in Hong Kong, video and redemption. Video games occupy two-thirds of the market and 98 percent of them are imported from Japan. The balance of the market is made up of redemption games and the United States supplies roughly 95 percent of them. Despite the Asian fascination with gambling, you rarely find such games in Hong Kong. Tight regulations prevent their operation and for the most part they are followed.

The amusement industry in Hong Kong has its roots in Taiwan and oth-

> ***"Our main concern is what effect, if any, the return of Hong Kong to the P.R.C.'s leadership will have on the amusement industry."***

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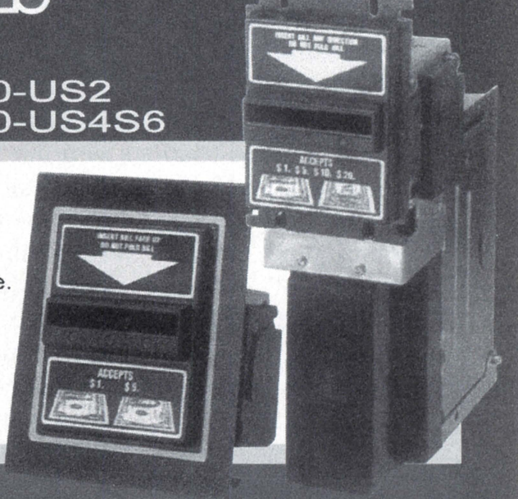
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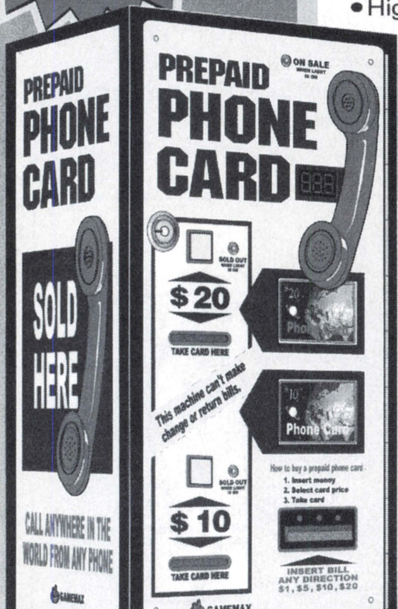
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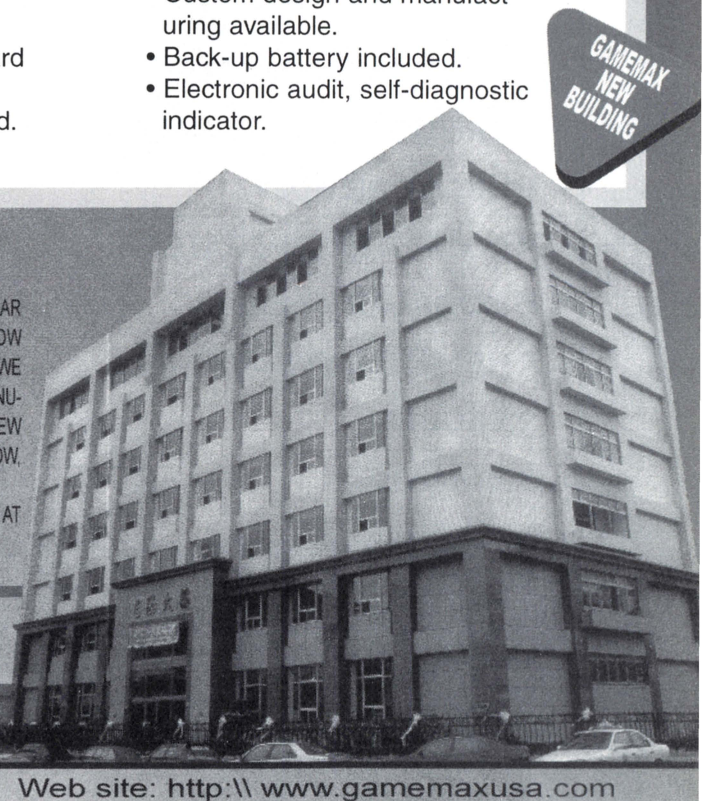
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er outside investors. Games, parts, and components are supplied by this means. Hong Kong doesn't manufacture its own products since that wouldn't fit its style. There is, however, an interesting triangle developing that should be closely monitored as things move forward.

Last month this column featured the relationship between mainland China and Taiwan. Taiwan continues to foster the amusement industry there and this coupled with the return of Hong Kong to the Chinese could really catapult that region's amusement industry. Speculation is that mainland China will adopt the regulations of Hong Kong, thereby flooding instant stability to that market. The same cooperation that currently exists between Hong Kong's government and operators will influence the same in China and open up the amusement industry enormously.

This is only speculation. But there is good reason to believe it will happen. Those of us who live and make our living in he United States will have to wait and see how Hong Kong's return to China impacts us. Each industry here will probably be affected differently. For amusement machines there seems to be positive news already. Southeast Asia appears to be restructuring to build a solid, more entertaining industry. Recent years have meant quiet times in that part of the world as far as companies in the United States are concerned. It may be time to gear up again, though.

Taiwan has adopted new laws that will reopen its arcades again soon. Mainland China has restructured under the watchful eye of the Taiwanese. And now Hong Kong returns to Chinese leadership. We try to report optimistic, yet realistic views in our column. There appears to be real good reason to think that way lately. Let's hope that the region has the political stability that has allowed it to prosper and remain peaceful over recent times. More importantly, our friends throughout Asia deserve the life that they have become accustomed to having. Let's amuse ourselves for a change and think positive! ▲

Entropy International and Entropy USA have been in the amusement industry for more than 20 years. Tony Yeh is vice president of marketing for the international company and Jeff Blair is the chief operating officer for the USA group. Entropy is involved in the design and manufacture of coin-op games and parts. They can be reached at (908)506-0002; (800)241-0633; e-mail (entropyusa@-sprynet.com); Web site (entropy-usa.com).

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INTERNATIONAL
SCENE

BRUNSWICK TO SPONSOR CAE '97

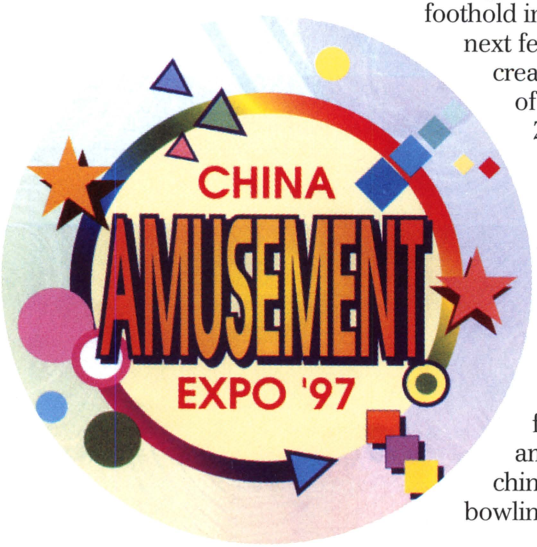
Brunswick will be the exclusive general sponsor at the China Amusement Expo '97 set for Sept. 25-29 at the Beijing Exhibition Centre in Beijing, People's Republic of China. CAE '97 is officially the International Amusement Facilities and Equipment Exhibition for China.

The recreation company paired with P & A Engineering Ltd. in 1994 for a joint venture named Brunswick China Ltd., which is now the largest provider of indoor amusement services and solutions, particularly bowling equipment, in the region.

Brenton Barrett, deputy managing director of Brunswick China Ltd., commented, "At the Expo we will be showcasing bowling as one of China's fastest growing entertainment pastimes to amusement center operators. It is a wholesome family sport that is also an attractive business opportunity."

Barrett points to Brunswick's Long Dragon Turn-Key Service as its top priority in China. The service includes three stages: 1) concept development and potential report, database, business, and financial consultation; 2) center design, equipment supply and installation, and management; and 3) sales management, training service, maintenance, and accessory supplies.

Brunswick plans to increase its foothold in China in the next few years by increasing the number of employees by 20 percent in the next 12 months and introducing Chinese customers to the concept of a family entertainment complex with multi-recreational facilities such as amusement machines, restaurants, bowling lanes, golf simulators, and other activities under the same roof.



With a population of over 1.2 billion and continued economic growth on the horizon, China is viewed as a huge market with investment opportunities for the amusement field. Said Barrett: "Because of the strong family values in China, parents are always spending time with their children and looking for amusement that fits the whole family, like bowling."

Brunswick has training facilities for customer's employees at its Guangzhou center and plans to build two more such centers in the future along with a bowling college in Wuhan.

CAE '97 will cover a broad spectrum of products for sports and leisure activities, indoor/outdoor amusement parks, audio/visual products, computers and electronic games, vending, arcades, and hotels and resorts.

One of the notable exhibitors is Delta Play, the Canadian supplier of custom play equipment that designs, manufactures, and installs playgrounds for international restaurant chains, theme parks, FECs, and shopping malls. Delta has completed over 45 new projects in Asia, including China, in the past eight months.

For more information, call (852)2865-2633; fax (852) 2666-1770 or (852)2865-5513.

MODERN PRODUCTS INSTALLS RIDE AT PAULTONS PARK

Modern Products Ltd. of North Lincolnshire has installed its family-size Cup and Saucer ride at Paultons Park at Romsey, Hampshire, in the United Kingdom.

The ride features four sets of three cups and saucers that can accommodate 60 adults and children. The ride is decorated in a fruit bowl motif accented by thousands of flashing lights.

Said Peter Rooke, managing director of Modern Products, "This family-size Cup and Saucer ride is an extension of our 70-strong range of ride attractions. We worked closely with Paultons Park to meet their exact requirements to make something really special."

The ride was just in time for the busy holiday period. Richard Mancey, managing director at the park reports, "The ride is very popular with all age groups and is a genuine family ride. It is already clear that this is going to be one of the most popular rides we have."

INTERNATIONAL SCENE

FER INTERAZAR '97 EXPECTS FULL HOUSE AT FALL SHOW

Spain is gearing up for the Oct. 1-3 FER INTERAZAR trade event in Madrid that will display all types of amusement products from children's games to vending machines and gaming equipment to foosball tables.

Show organizers say booth space reservations are exceeding expectations. They promise that the host facility will be transformed into "the largest amusement arcade in Europe."

A large number of amusement industry professionals attend the show to personally greet suppliers, clients, and friends, and to make their purchasing decisions.

This year the official show catalog (program) will include an International Guide to Manufacturers and Distributors in the Amusement Trade, and will serve as a useful working tool throughout the year.

For more information, contact Daniel Sarto, director, (93)416-14-66; fax (93)415-00-95.

GTI '97 FOCUSES ON ASIAN MARKET

Taiwan's GTI Expo '97 promises one of the biggest trade shows in Asia, along with an opportunity to pursue contacts in this prime market. Dates are Nov. 28-30 at the Taichung World Trade Center in Taichung, Taiwan's third largest city.

Products scheduled for exhibit include kiddie rides, jukeboxes, laser tag, coin and bill acceptors, pinballs, simulators, tickets and tokens, video games, virtual reality, plush toys, redemption machines, AWPs (amusement with prize machines), and a lot more.

Show organizers cite the following reasons to attend GTI: to discover the latest trends in the Asian coin-op sector, to expand your network of connections, to do business more easily in China through links with Taiwanese companies, and to see the industry's best technology from Asia and around the world.

Visitors are expected from every corner of the globe: Europe, the Middle East, Asia, Africa, the Pacific Rim, and North and South America.

For more information, call +886-2-760-7407; fax +886-2-762-3873.

AUSTRALIAN INDUSTRY UPDATE

■ The National Amusement Machine Operators Association Ltd. (NAMOA) in Australia is now examining a June 11 report on the possibility of restructuring amusement industry associations within the country.

NAMOA's board of directors has set up a committee to consult with state associations and industry representatives and prepare a final draft, constitution, and rules for a new organization.

At press time the name favored for the new entity is the Australian Amusement Industry Association (AAIA). It would include everyone in the amusement industry from operators and distributors to importers and exporters.

■ The Appeal Court handed down a ruling in late May that favored Sega/Anor (Leisure & Allied Industries) against Galaxy/Gottlieb in the parallel imports case relative to *Daytona USA* and *Virtua Cop* videos. The ruling means that parallel importation of games into Australia is prohibited.

An appeal is being pursued by Galaxy/Gottlieb.

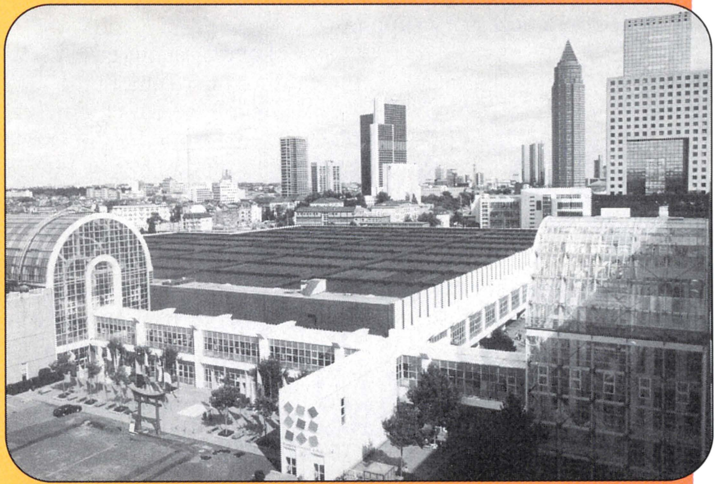
■ The Amusement Machine Operators Association of Queensland informs that a bill to repeal the public amusements section of the Art Unions & Public Amusements Act passed both sides of Parliament in May, meaning that effective July 1 permits will no longer be required. As a result operators of 100 machines can now save $6,000 per year.

Back in late 1996 the Queensland Office of Gaming Regulation asked for the views of the association in regard to this law. The association responded that it was totally opposed to the high cost of the license fees and the regulations. According to AMOA of Queensland president Ken Corley, "This result reflects what strong association membership can achieve. To the non-members (which I trust are few), your excuse, 'What's in it for me,' has just run out."

■ The program for the Australasia Amusement Expo '97 is now complete. The famous Gold Coast in Queensland is the setting for the event at the Marriott Surfers Paradise Resort, Nov. 6-9. Activities include a seminar program, trade show, annual dinner and awards night, golf day, and tennis tournament.

For more information on the show, contact Ken Priest, (61)7-3841-1021; fax (61)7-3841-1332; e-mail (amoaq@gil.com.au).

IMA'S NEW HALL



As reported last month, the German international trade fair IMA is changing its show dates and exhibit hall in 1998. Instead of winter dates in January, IMA will be in late November (Nov. 18-21) next year at the larger Hall 8 at the Frankfurt Fairgrounds.

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INTERNATIONAL
SCENE

ATEI CHAIRMAN PLEDGES FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Martin Burlin, who succeeded Sonia Meaden as chairman of ATEI earlier this year, gives his personal perspective on the show in his first full interview. Burlin will oversee the show's development for the next two years. ATEI has become one of the world's leading international amusement and gaming expos.

You've attended ATEI as a visitor, exhibitor, BACTA president, and ATE board member. What changes have you seen?

The amusement industry has changed markedly. In the early days the United Kingdom was a net importer of equipment. There weren't any AWPs, and there was no such thing as a British manufactured machine. The visitor base was mostly from the British Isles. The first show I attended at Alexandra Palace had no parks and rides equipment and no casino exhibits.

The changes have been amazing, but I think the most fundamental development has been the growth of our international visitor base. Over 35 percent of the buyers at ATEI now come from outside the United Kingdom, which is high for any exhibition.

LEFT: Martin Burlin, chairman of ATEI. **RIGHT:** Russell Smith has joined ATE's board of directors. He is the current national president of BACTA and chief executive of Konick PLC.

How would you summarize ATEI's strength and its appeal for exhibitors and buyers?

Putting on a successful exhibition is simple; it's about bringing together top exhibitors with serious buyers in a professional and well organized environment. How you get to that stage is the difficult part.

The ATE board of directors plays a central role. I think it helps that the directors aren't exhibition organizers. Instead, the board is made up of a group of highly skilled and successful business people who use ATEI either as visitors or exhibitors.

They have a true understanding of what's required. They recognize the need to move forward in a positive light, but also in a manner that is sympathetic to the markets ATEI serves. Although the number of amusement buyers who travel to London has increased by 339 percent over the last six years, we're not just interested in numbers; the main objective is to bring in quality buyers, the type of people who are prepared to invest in the right equipment.

How would you describe the show's personality to someone who hasn't attended?

Despite the high volume of international buyers and exhibitors, I think there's something uniquely British about ATEI. We have close and positive links with our trade association which provides a strong feeling of community as well as a high profile business forum.

ATEI is also an important social event where people from all strands of the industry meet every year. We host numerous political meetings, especially the International Regulators and the World Summit of Trade Associations. Finally, after the three day frenzy of business, there's the end of show ball, one of the best parties anywhere in the industry. I'm sure that anyone who has attended ATEI will agree that it's far more than just a trade exhibition.

Do you think the exhibition has reached the saturation point? Is there still room for growth?

It's fair to assume that we will not see the same dramatic increases in buyers that we experienced during the mid-'90s. As more countries are freeing up their gaming legislation we know from analyzing our visitor data that ATEI is their first choice destination. Our emphasis is now on maintaining the high quality of buyers. I believe that we are attracting the best and biggest buyers in the world, and that's what makes ATEI an order-writing show.

1998 will be the third year since Sonia Meaden relaunched the Parks, Rides & FECs section at the show. What are your thoughts on its early development?

In just two years it has come a long way. The growth, in terms of the number of exhibitors and additional floor space, has been up by over 30 percent. However, it's an area of the business that we will continue to grow. The European Showmen's Union (ESU/UFE) has held high-profile meetings at the show, attracting some of the most influential people in the industry. They have all been impressed with what's been achieved so far. This has given us the opportunity to hear their views on the needs of the market. Parks & Rides is an important part of the show and confirms our status as a one-stop show. The board has a number of ideas in mind for promoting this aspect of the show.

You have taken over the chairmanship of an exhibit that has set new attendance and exhibitor records in each of the last seven years. Is it a daunting task to follow such a record?

Firstly, I would like to congratulate Sonia Meaden. She worked so hard and lead by example. I'm sure Sonia would be the first to recognize that every chairman has the full support of a strong board and heads an exhibition with an unrivaled reputation.

Sonia is a hard act to follow. Mind you, I have had to do it before when I succeeded Sonia at BACTA, which must make me a sucker for punishment. However, with the board's support, it is not a terrifying task. Also, I am fortunate to have in Peter Rusbridge an excellent exhibition organizer. He and his hardworking staff, which we are also increasing, make a chairman's life a lot easier. They are geared to providing both exhibitors and visitors a quality service.

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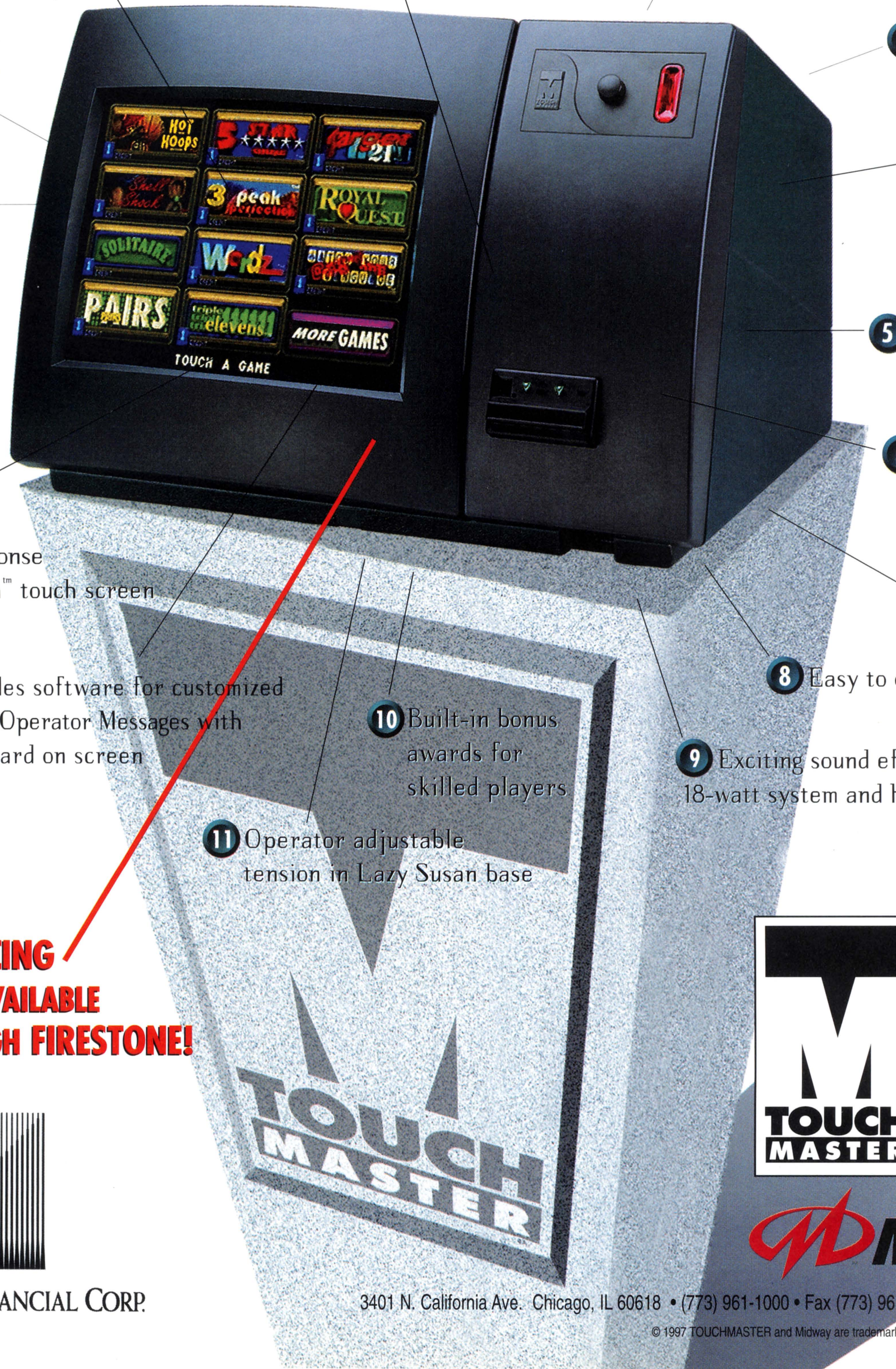

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INTERNATIONAL SCENE

INTERNATIONAL CALENDAR

AUGUST 13-14
EXIME, World Trade Center, Mexico City, Mexico. Call W.T. Glasgow Inc., (708)333-9292; fax (708)333-4086.

AUGUST 27-29
Asian Amusement International Theme Parks & Attractions '97, Singapore, World Trade Centre. Call Tony Chan, (65)222-8550; fax (65)224-6328.

SEPTEMBER 17-20
IAAPA Summer Meeting, New Amsterdam, Holland. Call IAAPA, (703)836-4800; fax (703)836-4801.

SEPTEMBER 18-21
JAMMA, International Exhibition Centre, Tokyo, Japan. Call +81-3-3438-2363; fax +81-3-5472-7115.

SEPTEMBER 25-29
China Amusement Expo, Beijing Exhibition Centre, Beijing PRC. Call (852)2865-2633; fax (852)2866-1770 or (852)2866-2076.

SEPTEMBER 30-OCTOBER 2
International Leisure Industry Week, NEC, Birmingham, England. Call +44-1932-564455; fax +44-1932-560009.

OCTOBER 1-3
FER-Interazar '97, Parque Ferial, Juan Carlos 1. Madrid, Spain. Call +34-3-416-1466; fax +34-3-415-0095.

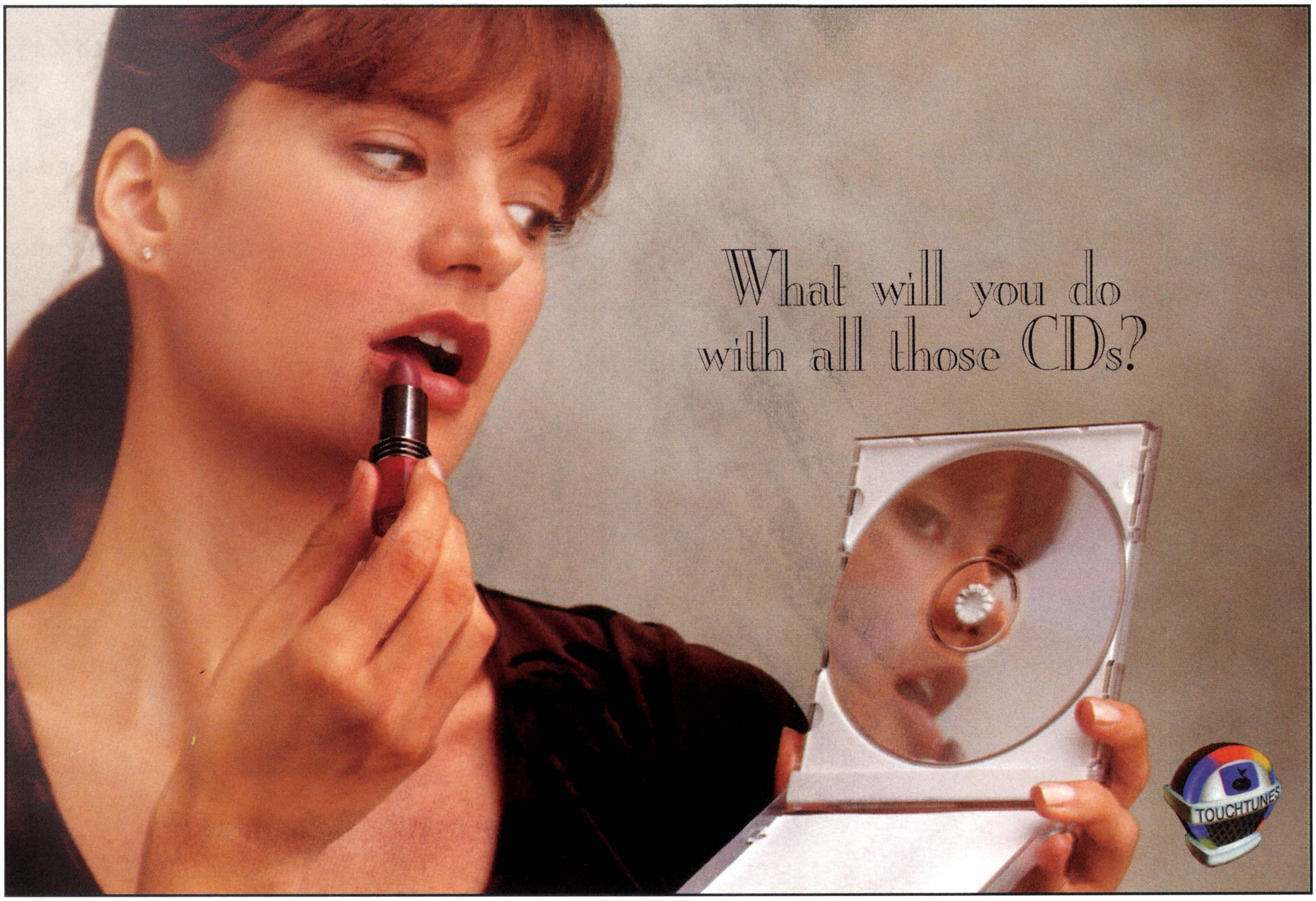
OCTOBER 16-19
ENADA '97, Rome Fairgrounds, Rome, Italy. Call (06)440-17-18; fax (06)440-27-18.

OCTOBER 22-25
Amusement Park China '97, China World Trade Center, Beijing, China. Call (203)840-5355; fax (203)840-9570.

OCTOBER 24-26
5th Park Show, Rimini, Italy. Call Rimini Trade Fair Corp., +39-541-711-240; fax +39-541-711-519.

NOVEMBER 6-9
Australia Amusement Expo, Marriott Surfers Paradise Resort, Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia. Call Ken Priest, 61-7-3841-1021; fax 61-7-3841-1332.

NOVEMBER 19-21
3rd International Amusement Expo and 5th South American Gaming Supplies Expo, Sheraton Buenos Aires Hotel & Towers, Buenos Aires, Argentina. Phone and fax: 541-3227039. ▲



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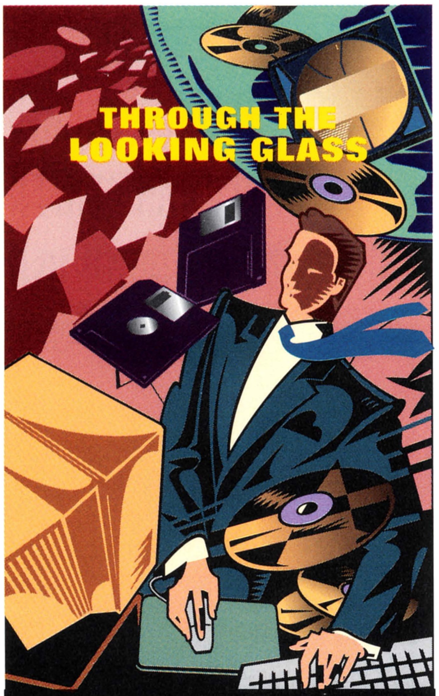


STEVE WHITE

E3 offers preview of coin-op game content

While the national media, including a full-page spread in USA Today, focused its attention on a wide range of new consumer content games geared for women, cyberbabes, and 3-D shooting games—introduced at the Electronic Entertainment Expo, several key players from the computer and coin-op industries hinted at the growing role of the arcade and location-based entertainment market.

One of those players was Dr. Andy Grove, chairman and CEO of Intel Corp., who demonstrated how Intel processors are being used to power a new generation of interactive experiences by taking a break from his keynote address to show off Evans & Sutherland's LBE experience Virtual Glider.

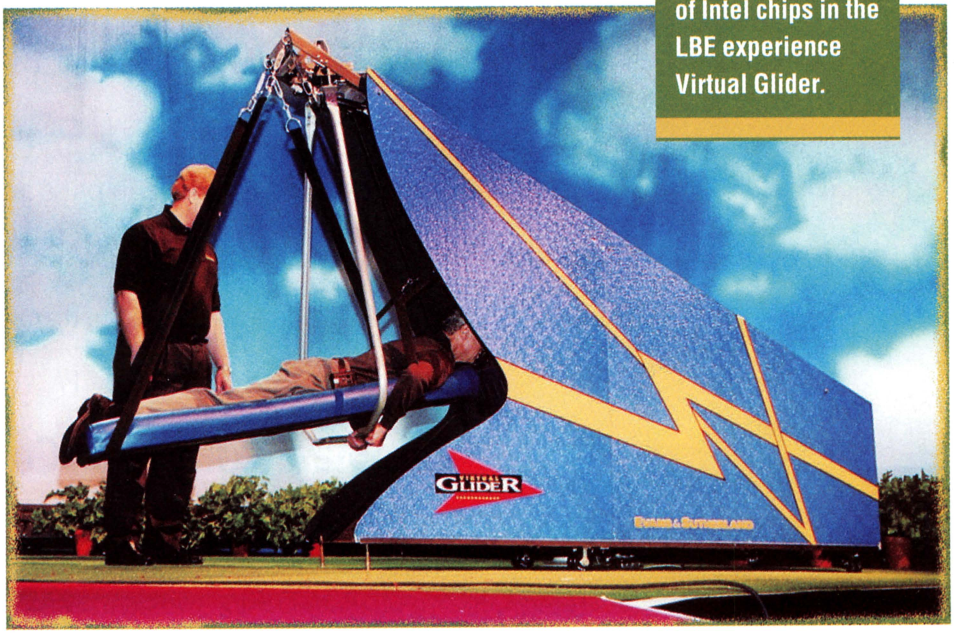
"The Virtual Glider demonstrates the need for Intel's high-performance processing power to drive real-time graphics to new heights," Grove said. "The Pentium II processor delivers superior performance for creative multimedia applications and will enable exciting new forms of interactive, electronic education and entertainment."

The Virtual Glider uses REALimage graphics acceleration technology, which helps bring Evan's & Sutherland's military and civil flight simulation expertise to commercial products that range from super-arcade attractions to personal graphics workstations. With this technology, developers can take advantage of the affordability and flexibility of the Intel architecture without sacrificing the performance previously available only on more costly Unix graphics systems.

Grove's presentation was part of a general call for the video gaming industry to redefine itself and expand beyond the young male twitch gamer to offer a greater range of users and applications. "The PC is the vehicle for future growth of the interactive entertainment industry," he declared.

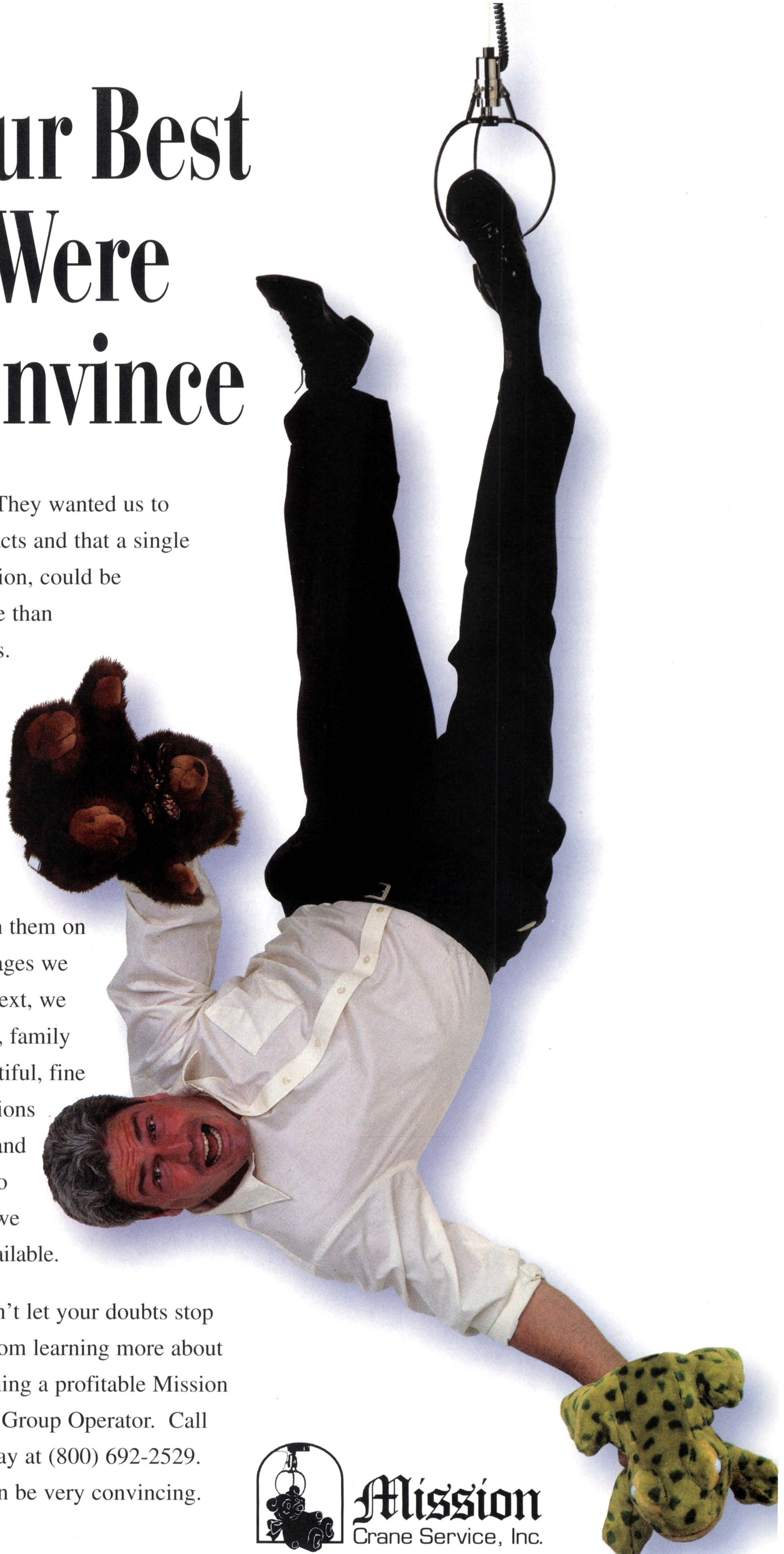
OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

Quantum 3D Inc., an offshoot of the now familiar 3Dfx Interactive graphics chipset sup-



Dr. Andy Grove, chairman and CEO of Intel Corp., shows off the use of Intel chips in the LBE experience Virtual Glider.

Some Of Our Best Operators Were Hard To Convince



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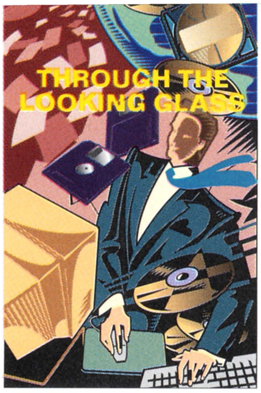

plier, was also on hand at E3 to make a major announcement about its new product, the Obsidian family of advanced real-time 3-D accelerators, which will be used by FASA Interactive as the design platform for its upcoming game MechWarrior 3.

Optimized for coin-op and LBE applications, Obsidian, which utilizes 3Dfx's Voodoo Graphics chipset, is a key component specified in the Open Arcade Architecture published by Intel.

“FASA Interactive has demonstrated a leadership role by incorporating 3-D techniques beyond the capabilities of current consumer level graphics,” said Quantum 3D's senior product marketing manager Danny Sanchez. The much-awaited game will be published by MicroProse and will utilize Microsoft's Direct 3D game development tool set.

Also attending E3 were National Amusement Network Inc., representatives Frank Seninsky of Alpha-Omega Amusements of East Brunswick, N.J., who serves as AMOA secretary, and John Klayh of TV-phone in Canada.

Seninsky said what he found was a few select titles for the coin-op market and a similar number of people looking to license titles for the arcade market. He also found a historical source for coin-op material from traditional manufacturers.

“I went through the show and saw six titles that could be of interest for NANI,” he said. “There were not that many entities besides the traditional coin-op people looking for titles but they are all vying for the same ones. The first title (for NANI) has to stand on its own. Had I done this 20 years ago I could have picked the hot hits.” ▲

"I WENT THROUGH THE SHOW AND SAW SIX TITLES THAT COULD BE OF INTEREST FOR NANI."

For more information, contact associate editor Steve White, (888)473-2376; e-mail (news@playmeter.com).

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COVER STORY

Incredible Technologies is, well, incredible!

When Incredible Technologies president and CEO Elaine Ditton took the stage at the recent American Showcase International in Las Vegas to accept the coveted award of Manufacturer of the Year the audience erupted in applause. Elaine's enthusiasm and genuine appreciation was refreshing and the award was well-deserved. Her husband and partner Richard, never seeking the limelight, beamed as his wife gave her acceptance speech. The recipient is chosen by distributors who rank each manufacturer in a number of categories, including quality and innovation of products and service, production and design, customer satisfaction, marketing, and promotion. Elaine thanked the distributors and operators for their support, while giving an extra special thank you to her hardworking, dedicated employees who, she confided, were the foundation of the company's success.

BALLY'S
LAS VEGAS

Here's Elaine Ditton graciously accepting the Manufacturer of the Year award from AAMA president Rick Kirby during the ASI show in Las Vegas earlier this year.

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Incredible Technologies' advisory group, (bottom, l-r): Scott Morrison, Elaine Ditton, and Richard Ditton; (top, l-r): Mike Hanson, Steve Jaskowiak, and Larry Hodgson.

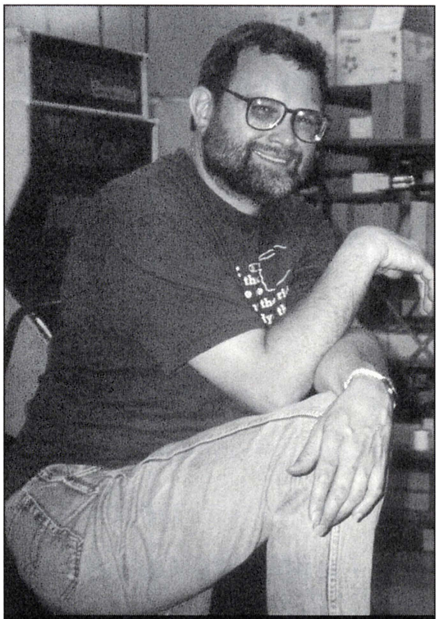
A partial group of Incredible Technologies' programmers, (bottom, l-r): Ilana Rudnik, Jane Siegrist, and Larry Hodgson; (top, l-r): Richard Ditton, Tino Kalafatis, Jim Zielinski, Brian Janoulio, Brian Smolik, and Chris Oberth.

From left: Artists Bob Nagel, Ron Schrems, Sara Schulman, Adam Bain, Ellen Atkins, and Adam Bedore.

TOURNAMENT SYSTEM

What has Incredible Technologies done to deserve the honor of being named Manufacturer of the Year? It has accomplished something that many have predicted will be the future of the coin-op industry—interactive tournament play. The company's International Tournament System (ITS) has literally taken the industry by storm. Special dedicated versions of *Peter Jacobson's Golden Tee 3D Golf* and *World Class Bowling* connect to regular phone lines where tournament information is transferred from Incredible Technologies to each game. The company runs and administers monthly tournaments on the more than 1,700 *Golden Tee Golf* games and 200 *World Class Bowling* games already in the field.

IT has awarded over $600,000 in cash prizes to thousands of players across the country who play by carefully created rules and procedures designed to make operator and location involvement easy and understandable. These games have generated a wide base of avid and loyal players and introduced and expanded the coin-op customer base. Income on these tournament games has been consistent, something operators don't see often enough.

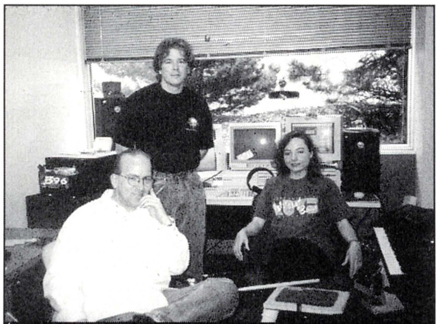


Programmer Ted Kubik

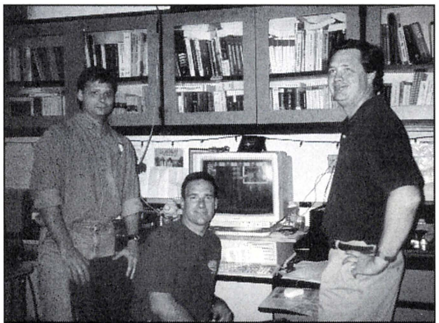
Incredible Technologies didn't stop in the United States, it took its successful system international. The International Tournament System began preliminary testing in England in June. Although only on five machines, tournament plays have proven outstanding, and the system shows great promise for the future.

It should be noted that *Peter Jacobson's Golden Tee 3D Golf* was practically an industry phenomenon even before reaching epic success as part of tournament play. The game, an original game from IT, consistently makes up to $900 per week report operators who are claiming that the game has helped revitalize their street location market. Its success can be credited in part to its easy-to-understand trackball control, the clever and challenging courses, and the three-dimensional look. One to four players can select from three beautifully designed 18-hole courses. Reverse angle on the green camera views and instant replays all add to the fun.

World Class Bowling, developed by the same designers of the classic *Capcom Bowling* and Strata bowling games, is a cleverly fun game, looking



The sound team, (l-r): Matt Kern, Kyle Johnson, and Kristi Hall.



The hardware department, (l-r): Jeff Siegrist, Terry Little, and Steve Jaskowiak.

Art director Donna Lucania is flanked by fellow artists Ralph Melgrosa (l) and Alan Noon.

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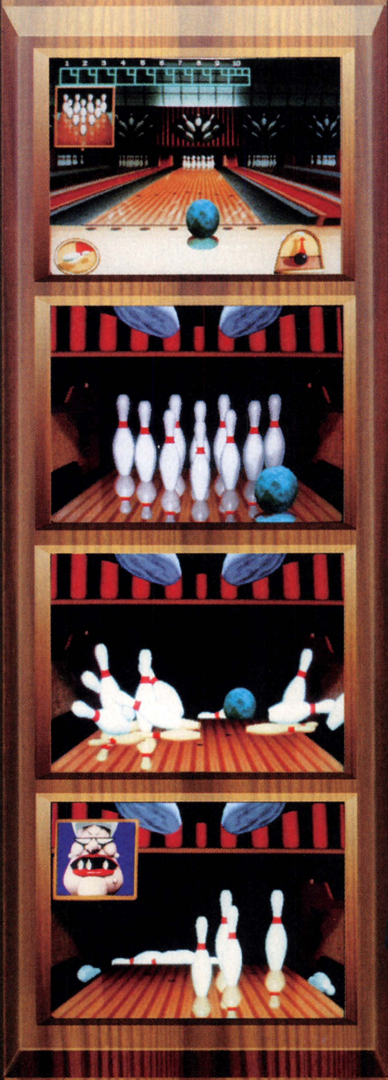

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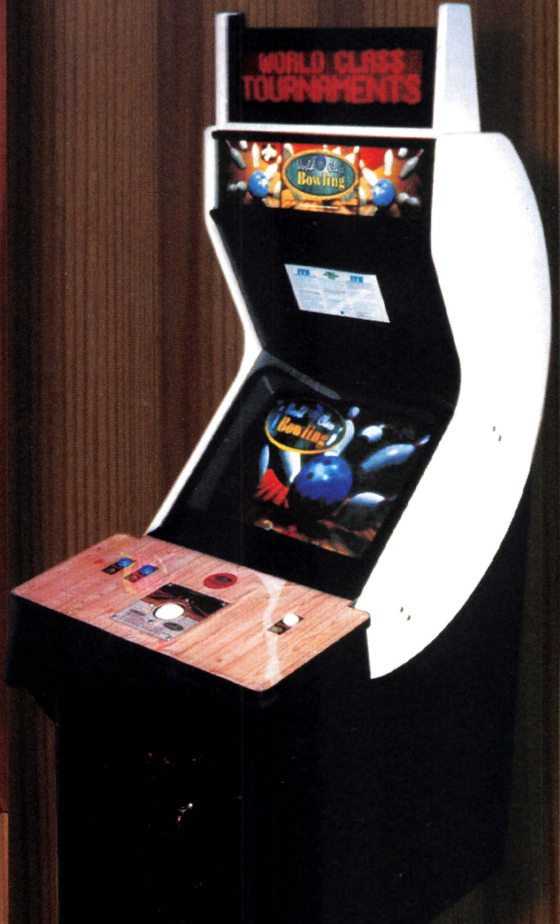

Cabinet Dimensions
84" H x 27 3/4" W x 42 1/2" D

to be quite another popular piece. It, too, should see excellent earnings for a long time to come.

The interactive tournament aspect of these two games only enhances their popularity. If you think that this interactive game play is here today, gone tomorrow, perhaps you'd like to reconsider. Incredible Technologies is committed to keeping the tournaments exciting and challenging for many years to come and expects to hold monthly tournaments and special events on both *Golden Tee Golf* and *World Class Bowling.*

Last March, Incredible Technologies held a live national playoff for the 12 best *Golden Tee Golf* players in the country during the ASI show in Las Vegas. The contest awarded over $30,000 in cash and prizes. Because of its success, more events like it are in the works for the near future.

We asked Richard Ditton why he thought that Incredible Technologies' tournament system was enjoying such popularity. "Interactive play like we're offering on *Golden Tee Golf* and *World Class Bowling* breathes new life into video games. It's providing an excitement that we haven't seen in a long time. I remember back in 1979 when Elaine and I would go to the local bowling alley to play video games. People are doing that again. They are actually seeking out video games," Richard explained. "I think the reason there's this new level of excitement in street locations is that there hasn't been anything like it to attract players."

THE IT TEAM

Yes, successful games dictate successful companies, but the Dittons know that to have those successful games takes a dedicated, committed team. They rely on a devoted group of managers, each having been with the company over 10 years. Michael Hanson, vice president and general counsel, acts as in-house legal staff, writing and reviewing contracts and documents, interpreting policies and defending the company's best interests. Michael also heads up the ITS tournament system and programs much of

INCREDIBLE TECHNOLOGIES scores with bowling and golf tournaments

Incredible Technologies recently completed two national tournaments, both conducted on its International Tournament System. The first, Alley Bop, pitted competitors against one another on the company's *World Class Bowling* video while the second, May Bee Open, featured play on *Peter Jacobsen's Golden Tee 3 D Golf.*

The top winner in Alley Bop was Jennifer Williams of Urbana, Ill., who won $1,000. Coming in second was Joey Vartanian of Chicago, Ill., taking home $600. Third place finisher Danny J. of Champaign, Ill., won $500 for his efforts.

Here's a look at the final May Bee Open results:

National: 1st—Todd Singleton of Houston, Texas, ($2,000); 2nd—Ryan Bourgeois of Houston, Texas, ($1,500); 3rd—Ted Delis of Bridgeview, Ill., ($1,100).

Illinois Division: 1st—Antonios Dagres of Bridgeview, Ill.($500); 2nd—Tony Spera of Westmont, Ill., ($400).; 3rd—Robert G. Jasinski of Justice, Ill.,($300).

Nebraska Division: 1st—Cliff Bennet of Omaha, Neb.; 2nd—John Arnold of Omaha, Neb.; 3rd—Bob Borgaila of Omaha, Neb.

Central Division: 1st—Eddie Stakes of Houston, Texas; 2nd—Tim Scott of Hazelwood, Mo.; 3rd—David Jones of Houston, Texas.

Northeastern Division: 1st—Randy Benshoff of Perrysburg, Ohio; 2nd—Chris Hill of Pittsburgh, Pa.; 3rd—Bren Martin of Hampstead, Md.

Southeastern Division: 1st—J.G. Saunders of Tampa, Fla.; 2nd—John D. Hunter of Mt Airy, N.C.; 3rd—R. Hall of Mt. Airy, N.C.

Western Division: 1st—Matt Young of Seattle, Wash.; 2nd—Rob Burnett of Bellingham, Wash.; 3rd—Gerald Hoopii of Honolulu, Hawaii.

> *"Interactive play like we're offering on Golden Tee Golf and World Class Bowling breathes new life into video games."*

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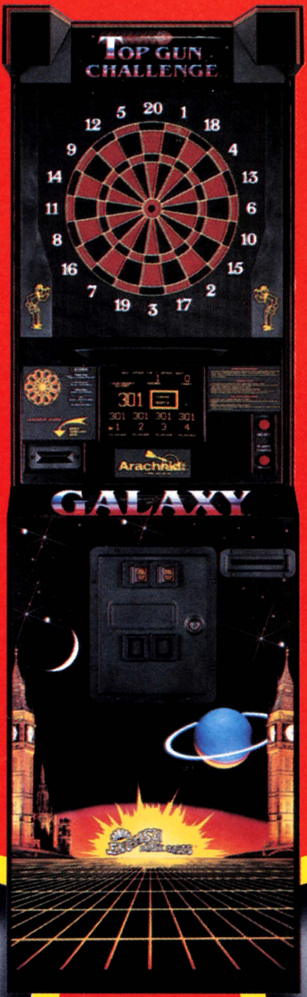
THE COMPLETE SYSTEM



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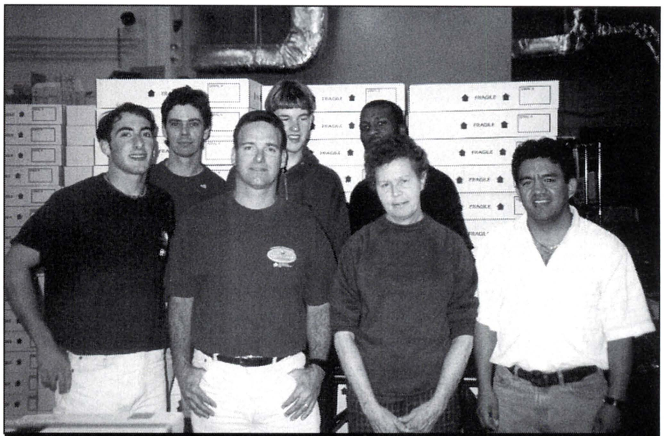
The accounting department, (l-r): Chris Morrison, Theresa Amanti, Karen Clausing, and Gay Bilotta.


Here's a group shot of the technical/shipping department.

the code that administers the monthly remote tournaments.

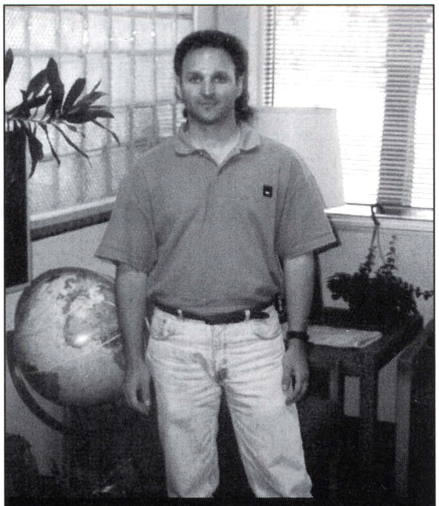
Scott Morrison worked with Elaine and Richard back in 1982, developing games for Bally/Midway (see an article on *Tapper* in this issue). Scott has worn many hats at Incredible Technologies, starting as an artist and game designer and moving into project management, advertising, cabinet design, copywriting, and serving as trade show coordinator. Scott's current focus has been the International Tournament System, planning and designing most of the operator forms and procedures.

Larry Hodgson is the vice president of product development. He is a hands-on leader of many of the successful Incredible Technologies products in both consumer and coin-op. Larry was the main designer and visionary of the *Golden Tee 3D Golf* games. Larry's ability to get the best out of the team members, his meticulous attention to detail, and his ability to know when something is just right has made him an indispensable member of the IT staff.

Steve Jaskowiak, director of hardware, heads up the IT hardware department. Every piece of hardware created by the company was overseen by Steve and his hardworking staff. Steve's focus has always been to make the most powerful and versatile platform possible, yet keep costs reasonable for the industry. Steve is also a gifted programmer, and was the main programmer on the recent *World Class Bowling* game.

The service and tech department, headed by Scott Allie and Terry Little, has gained the reputation as one of the best in the industry. The department has forged a new level of communication with distributors, operators, and players because of the popularity of current games and the close relationships created through the tournament system. Incredible Technologies has given service a personal touch that it says is second to none. Richard said that people tend to remember the bad things so the company goes to great lengths to eliminate those things. "We have one goal and that's to satisfy our customers. We have a service department that is determined to achieve that goal," he said.

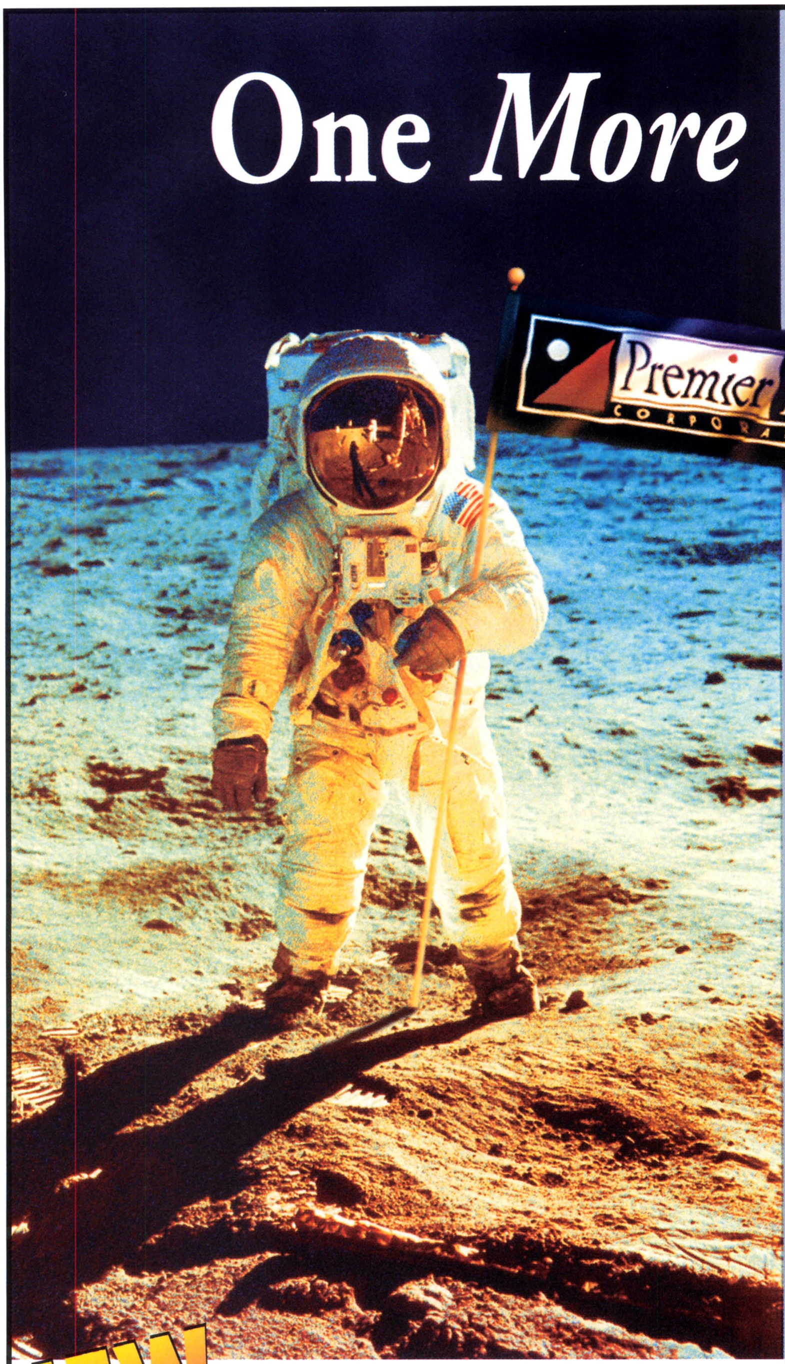
There are many more talented and hardworking designers, programmers, artists, and sound designers at Incredible Technologies, many with the company for over five years. Richard Ditton explains that everyone at the company is important, from the techni-


Scott Morrison has worn many hats during his years at Incredible Technologies. His current focus is the International Tournament System.

Carol Anderson in purchasing

Receptionist Mae Keyes

One *More* Giant Leap



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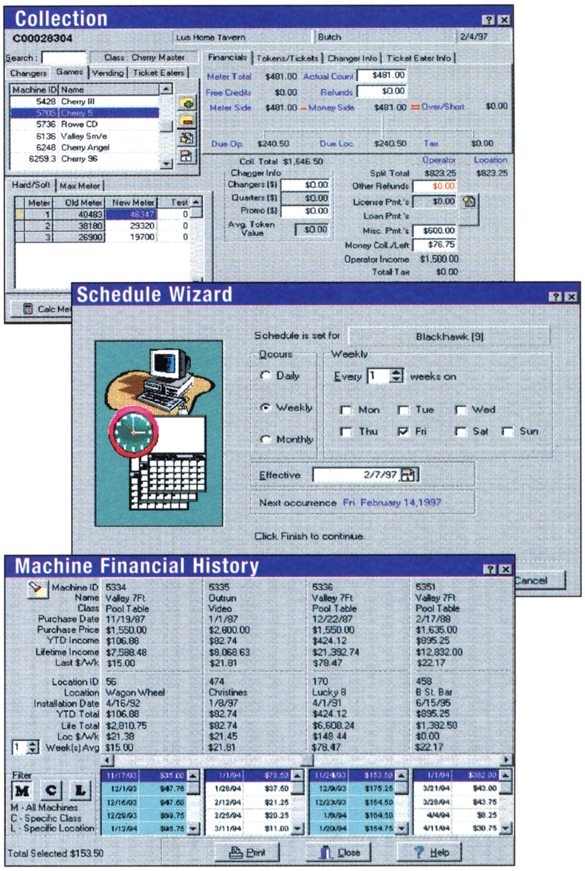

Collection

C00028304 | Lus Home Tavern | Butch | 2/4/97

Search: | Class : Cherry Master

Machine ID	Name
5428	Cherry III
5705	Cherry 5
5736	Rowe CD
6136	Valley Sm/e
6248	Cherry Angel
6259.3	Cherry 96

Meter	Old Meter	New Meter	Test
1	40483	46347	0
2	38180	29320	0
3	26900	19700	0

Meter Total $481.00 Actual Count $481.00
Free Credits $0.00 Refunds $0.00
Meter Side $481.00 – Money Side $481.00 = Over/Short $0.00
Due Op. $240.50 Due Loc. $240.50 Tax $0.00

Coll. Total $1,646.50

Changer Info
Changers ($) $0.00
Quarters ($) $0.00
Promo ($) $0.00
Avg. Token Value $0.00

	Operator	Location
Split Total	$823.25	$823.25
Other Refunds	$0.00	
License Pmt.'s	$0.00	
Loan Pmt.'s		
Misc. Pmt.'s	$600.00	
Money Coll./Left	$76.75	
Operator Income	$1,500.00	
Total Tax	$0.00	

Schedule Wizard

Schedule is set for Blackhawk [9]

Occurs: ○ Daily ● Weekly ○ Monthly

Weekly: Every 1 weeks on
☐ Mon ☐ Tue ☐ Wed
☐ Thu ☑ Fri ☐ Sat ☐ Sun

Effective 2/7/97

Next occurrence Fri February 14,1997

Click Finish to continue.

Machine Financial History

Machine ID	5334	5335	5336	5351
Name	Valley 7Ft	Outrun	Valley 7Ft	Valley 7Ft
Class	Pool Table	Video	Pool Table	Pool Table
Purchase Date	11/19/87	1/1/87	12/22/87	2/17/88
Purchase Price	$1,550.00	$2,800.00	$1,550.00	$1,635.00
YTD Income	$106.88	$82.74	$424.12	$895.25
Lifetime Income	$7,588.48	$8,068.63	$21,392.74	$12,832.00
Last $/Wk	$15.00	$21.81	$78.47	$22.17
Location ID	56	474	170	458
Location	Wagon Wheel	Christines	Lucky 8	8 St. Bar
Installation Date	4/16/92	1/8/97	4/1/91	6/15/95
YTD Total	$106.88	$82.74	$424.12	$895.25
Life Total	$2,810.75	$82.74	$6,608.24	$1,382.50
Loc $/Wk	$21.38	$21.45	$148.44	$0.00
1 Week(s) Avg	$15.00	$21.81	$78.47	$22.17

11/17/93	$35.00	1/1/94	$78.50	11/24/93	$153.50	1/1/94	$382.00
12/1/93	$47.75	1/28/94	$37.50	12/9/93	$175.25	3/21/94	$43.00
12/16/93	$47.50	2/12/94	$21.25	12/23/93	$164.50	3/28/94	$43.75
12/29/93	$89.75	2/25/94	$20.25	1/6/94	$164.50	4/4/94	$8.25
1/12/94	$95.75	3/11/94	$11.00	1/20/94	$154.75	4/11/94	$30.75

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L - Specific Location

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cians who repair the boards to those who design them. "Everyone here is valuable. The core group has been together for 10 years, making us a bit of a family," he said. "We treat our staff with respect and give them authority to make many decisions in their departments. That gives the employees a sense of job satisfaction and that's what we want."

With the Dittons' great faith and respect for the Incredible Technologies team, they are rewarded with loyalty, versatility, and a lot of hard work. In fact, these qualities are hallmarks of an IT employee.

HISTORY

Incredible Technologies is located in Rolling Meadows, Ill., but is fast outgrowing its facilities. It's been in business since 1985 and employs over 45 designers, programmers, artists and animators, sound engineers, service technicians, and production personnel. It certainly is a far cry from the early days when the Dittons decided to take a shot at their own development company even though the market was considered "soft" at the time. They were no strangers to the coin-op industry, both having a number of years of experience in video game design and development.

Some of the early Incredible Technologies' projects included the operating system and programming of Data East's first pinball games and a number of consumer games for Apple II, Commodore 64, and Commodore Amiga.

Elaine's knack for business and her natural enthusiasm soon brought the company a wide variety of diverse projects. In less than six months, the number of employees had doubled and the company moved to "real offices" in Arlington Heights, Ill. The business continued to grow to meet the creative demands for projects Elaine was able to secure including hardware and software for the original networked BattleTech system, highly acclaimed Amiga games for CinemaWare, and more programming for Data East's pinball line.

In 1988 Incredible Technologies accepted the challenge from some coin-op veterans to develop an inexpensive video game that could be sold as a kit. If you recall, during that period, everyone wasn't making kits and operators were demanding them. Since five of the eight original employees all came from the coin-op video game industry, the project was a natural. Using internal funding and clever hardware design, a simple and inexpensive hardware platform was created. Between regular assignments, artist Scott Morrison created screen art and Richard programmed a special magic into IT's first game, *Capcom Bowling*. The game was a tremendous hit, selling thousands of units over a three-year span. You can still find some of the original games generating income.

With the success of *Capcom Bowling*, IT expanded its internal coin-op development. The company adopted the brand name Strata for these products, developed on hardware created internally by IT. The first game under the Strata label was the original *Golden Tee Golf*, which also proved to be a long-term earning game in arcade and street locations. In the past six years Incredible Technologies produced and manufactured over 15 games including *Strata Bowling, HotShots Tennis, Arlington Horse Racing, Rim Rockin' Basketball*, and *Time Killers*.

Eventually the Strata name was dropped and new games like *Peter Jacobson's Golden Tee Golf* and *World Class Bowling* appear under Incredible Technologies. After reviewing the history of this fascinating company, it's only natural to wonder what's in store for the future. We asked Richard Ditton what they are working on. "We currently have two new tournament products under development. We are expanding internationally and the tournament in England was even better than we planned. We view that as a major growth area," he said.

Richard also told us that street operators have always been critical to Incredible Technologies' success and wanted to stress that there will always be a focus on them. "Street operators are working harder than ever and it's not an easy life. They need games that they can afford, that will give them a fair return on investment. That's our specialty. Our forte is kits and we only made dedicated games when operators pressured us for them."

He continued, "Street operators need to look at new venues because bars are faced with a downturn in business mainly because of cracking down on DWI laws. There are still new opportunities for operators in a diverse number of locations. Right now, I'd say that only a few games like *Golden Tee Golf* will allow operators to penetrate new locations like golf pro shops for instance. But the main thing is that operators have to keep trying. It's not easy designing games that will make street operators and their customers happy and it's not easy operating them. We have to remember that there are only so many ways to spend those entertainment dollars so we have to be real good at what we do to get our share." ▲

> ***"Street operators are working harder than ever and it's not an easy life. They need games that they can afford, that will give them a fair return on investment. That's our specialty."***

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Tap into one of the fun video games from the industry's past

Our readers have told us that they love reading about the classic games and we've promised to feature some articles just for them. This story is about one of the industry's classic video games. After reading it, you'll probably want to try your hand on a vintage *Tapper*.

TIM **FERRANTE and** MARC **SMUTNEY**

Video games are different things to different people. A local pinball retailer I know hates them with a passion, but at Christmas time he makes money selling them. I grew up on the things and have fond memories of the corner arcade that first appeared in my neighborhood. It was called Fat Daddies, and it opened with mostly pinballs and pool tables. Placed in a corner were a few videos whose presence was no doubt a necessity if Fat Daddies was to be a place of the times.

The balance of coin-op power soon tipped and videos gained enormous popularity and collections while street operators confidently predicted the demise of the silver ball. Like most arcades (then and now) the videos would soon outnumber pinballs by alarming percentages.

Regardless of your game-playing passion during its explosive growth, dozens of video games would endear themselves to the masses. *Pac-Man, Space Invaders, Breakout, Asteroids, Missile Command, Galaxian*...these are true classics and now, some 15 or more years later, there are would-be collectors searching for that particular game they enjoyed so much.

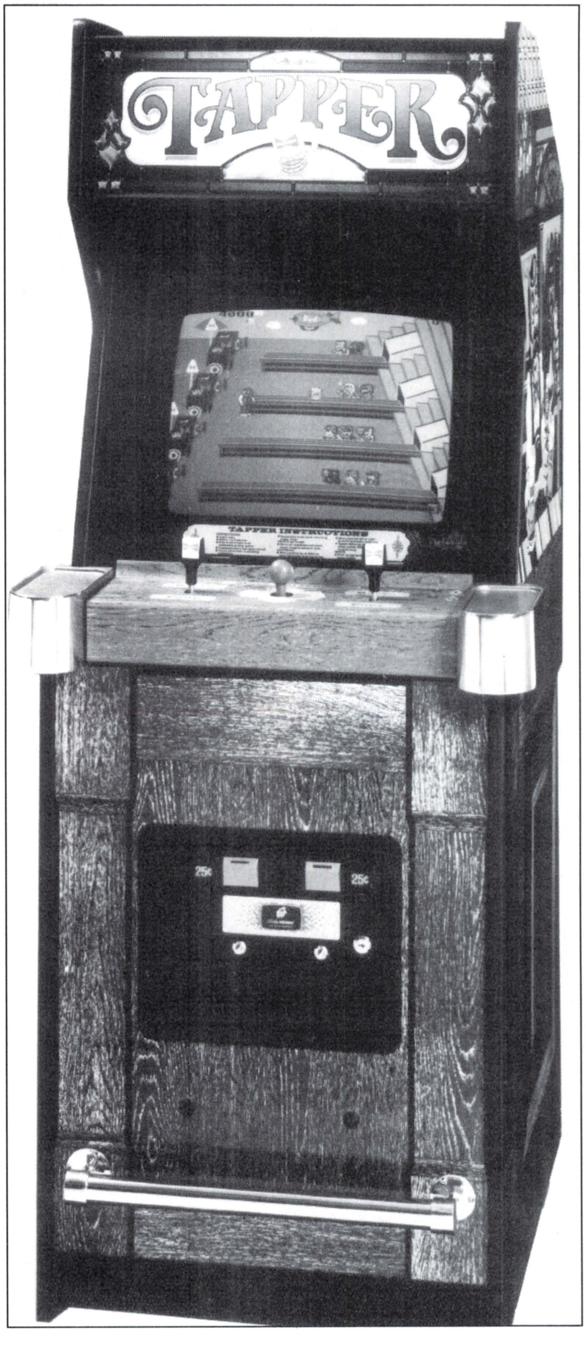
Bally/Midway's *Tapper* is one such example of a memorable game that was usually enjoyed with friends at the local watering hole.

The standard model was destined for the adult beverage locations while the *Root Beer Tapper* answered the demand for family-friendly environments. If your game room has a bar or one is in the planning stage, then a *Tapper* could become the focal point for your guests just as it has for mine.

It's a unique, fast-paced video game released in late 1983. Utilizing the powerful name recognition of Budweiser, it was a natural for bars and taverns. I sold my first *Tapper* (in less than perfect condition) to a friend who is a street operator. He insists this piece is a solid earner and rotates it in and out of taverns and firehouses. If you think about it, that's good for the operator but translates into a higher purchase price for the video collector.

Dave Marofske, former president of Bally/Midway and current owner/president of Grand Products, revealed some insider information regarding this timeless game. According to Marofske, a husband and wife programming team, Elaine and Richard Ditton, were responsible for the game along with Scott Morrision. Production began in December 1983 and continued through the first half of 1984.

Tom Nieman, another former Bally employee, handled the Budweiser marketing promotion. The licensing deal permitted the use of the Bud logo and theme song in exchange for a quantity of the first prototypes, which had different cabinet side panel graphics than the production models. The prototype graphics featured a multicolored comic-like bar scene, while the



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production model featured a more serious pen and ink-styled illustration.

Marofske recalled a production run for the proto-*Budweiser Tapper* of only 10-15 units. As for production models, he says there were 3,200 uprights, 500 cocktail tables, and 1,200 upright *Root Beer Tappers*. Even though these production totals are anemic in comparision to today's production runs, Marofske stated that by 1984 the industry was in a downward cycle and those totals were considered to be quite good. While it's difficult to refute such an authoritative source, could these numbers have been higher?

Marofske explained the reasons for developing the lesser-known *Root Beer Tapper*. Since Bally/Midway was affiliated with the Aladdin's Castle arcade chain, a request had come down through channels to create a version of the popular game that would be appropriate for the family arcade environment. The cabinet was almost the same except for changes to the side panel graphics and marquee. The mug holders and brass foot rail were not included for practical as well as child safety reasons.

Game play

Tapper is a patterned game and, frankly, a bit repetitive. The graphics and operation software are primitive by today's standards, but we're talking about a game designed in 1983. Computer programming advances being what they are, *Tapper* might as well have been designed in the back of a Conestoga wagon. But the game theme and action are so unique that its limitations don't seem to matter. *Tapper* utilizied the phenomenal MRC III Control Logic System, which provided 49 different sounds, on-screen diagnostics, and bookkeeping functions.

If you've never tended bar or slung beers, that nervewracking prospect is the basis of *Tapper's* challenge. It doesn't get any better than this! Game play consists of five separate scenes, four of which have mul-

THE TAPPER FILES

After the *Tapper* article appeared in GameRoom magazine, publisher Tim Ferrante received this note from Scott Morrison, who was the concept designer on the game. Here's what he had to say:

"I really enjoyed the recent article on *Tapper*. It was well written and fun to read. However, I would like to point out that Steve Meyer was the programmer for the game, not Richard and Elaine Ditton. Richard and Elaine were the programmers of *Domino Man* and *Journey*, and Steve was the main programmer on *Wacko*, *Tapper*, and *Timber*. Richard did a lot of low level programming and Elaine programmed the sounds on *Tapper*, along with Rick Hicaro. I came up with the game concepts for all of the above, except for *Domino Man*, which was designed by Marvin Glass people before I started there. I did the art on all of the games, as well as the sounds and music for Timber.

"In the old days, we weren't allowed to advertise the designer's names so we sneaked them in as an Easter egg. If you hold both joysticks and both tappers in the down position and press the one- and two-player buttons while the beer fills up the *Tapper* logo on the title screen, our credits will appear.

"The concept for the game was basically mine, and it remained pretty true to my vision, but Steve was the one who made it so darn playable and fun. Of course, we welcomed comments and suggestions from lots of talented folks at Marvin Glass and Bally/Midway and had the good sense to listen to many of them. The only real difference that I can remember is that the customers originally were going to walk in front of the bar, but I didn't have enough art space to animate so many pairs of legs. The final version shows the back of the bar with the bartender the only one requiring a full body.

"The bartender character also appears in *Domino Man* and *Timber*. I modeled him after a talented artist and designer at Marvin Glass named Mike Ferris. Since he drew the storyboards for *Domino Man*, I thought it was appropriate to put him in the game. Mike had a huge black mustache, a bald head, and always wore red T-shirts. The mustache helped in designing facial features in those tiny sprites I had to work with.

"An interesting sound story: During *Tapper's* development, we went to Texas Instruments to test out their newfangled audio digitizing technology. We thought it would be funny if the characters would burp after finishing their drinks. Steve, Elaine, Rick, and I sat in the TI conference room with a six-pack of beer and a microphone and recorded belches for about three hours. The nasty sounds were burned onto a chip and incorporated into an early version of the game. It was pretty funny and we had some really juicy belches. But it got old fast and Budweiser wasn't too pleased. Besides the chip at the time was just too expensive so we gave it up!"

Root Beer TAPPER
ROOT BEER

tiple levels of play per scene depending upon the level of difficulty set in the bookkeeping menu. Upon starting the game, after selecting one- or two-player mode, you must use the joystick to control the bartender's movements and the mini beer taps to pour the draft beers for the onslaught of thirsty patrons.

The first scene takes place in the Old West where thirsty cowboys and cowgirls appear in a saloon and begin pounding on the bar demanding beers. The bartender must not only serve all of the customers before they reach the end of the bar, but must also pick up all empty glasses to advance to the next level. If a patron reaches the end of the bar before being served, he will pick up the bartender and slide him down the bar and out the swinging doors, causing the player to lose his turn.

Should an empty glass hit the floor before being picked up by the bartender, again the player will lose his turn. Move the bartender down the bar to pick up a tip and saloon girls appear and dance to the Budweiser theme song causing most of the bar patrons to turn their backs to the screen giving the bartender a much needed rest. Be careful! If the player tries to serve a patron whose back is turned, the glass will slide all the way down the bar and cause him to lose his turn. Serve all of the patrons, catch all of the empties, and move on to the next level.

Once all of the levels are completed for the current scene, the player is rewarded with a Bonus Rack and a one-on-one with the Beer Bandit. Bonus Rack mode appears between each of the four game scenarios. This bonus is worth 3,000 points and the action is simple—the beer Bandit moves down the bar from left to right, shaking five of six cans of beer. He then moves back towards the left side of the screen. Once he's back at the starting point, he pounds his fist on the bar causing the six cans of beer to be shuffled (like a shell game) in an attempt to confuse the player, who must now use the joystick to position the bartender behind the unshaken can of beer.

If the player picks the wrong can he'll receive a foamy surprise instead of the bonus points. If he picks the unshaken can he is rewarded with 3,000 points and a theme song.

Three more scenarios follow and game play is essentially the same. However, each new setting is interrupted with another chance at the Beer Bandit's 3,000-point bonus. There are Thirsty Jocks (with dancing cheerleaders), Punk Rockers (with dancing punk girls), and Space-The Last Frontier (with dancing alien ladies).

I've yet to reach this final challenge, even with the game difficulty set on the easiest level. Let's face it, this game was designed to earn money, not to permit customers to play all day long on the same quarter!

If you ever get the chance to play either version of *Tapper*, don't pass it up. I think you'll enjoy this game as much as I have. I've made my *Budweiser Tapper* the focal point of my game room bar and am hoping to add a *Root Beer Tapper* one day. Anyone out there have one for sale (in excellent condition, of course!)? ▲

Tim Ferrante is publisher and editor of GameRoom, a 68-page monthly magazine targeted at the home coin-op collector marketplace. It covers pinball machines, jukeboxes, arcade video, Coca-Cola, slots, and more. For more information contact GameRoom Magazine, P.O. Box 41, Keyport, NJ 07735; (908)739-1955; fax (908)739-2834. This article was the first submitted by Marc Smutny of Western Pennsylvania.

IN MEMORY

JEAN COUTU

"All work is noble. A life of ease is not for any man." Thomas Carlyle

"The greatness of work is inside man." Pope John Paul II

The industry lost a devoted member on June 13 when Jean Coutu, vice president of Laniel Automatic Machines Inc. in Montreal, Quebec, Canada, passed away following a brief battle with cancer.

Coutu was due to celebrate his 50th anniversary in the amusement business in December. He was most recently seen at the Amusement Showcase International in March; the illness was diagnosed shortly after the event.

Marc Raymond, who worked with Coutu for nine years, commented, "I have lost a great teacher." Coutu guided and inspired other staff at Laniel Automatic ever since he came to the company shortly after World War II.

A bachelor, Coutu often said, "My wife is Laniel Automatic and my children are the employees." As far as hobbies were concerned, Raymond recalled that Coutu put it this way: "I don't like playing golf. My hobby is to sell 20 games a day."

Coutu lived for his work and the company, shying away from vacations and any thought of retirement. During his tenure the company amassed over 40 awards that are proudly displayed at Laniel Automatic's headquarters. Said Raymond, "After his long years of service we say he finally has a vacation."

One of Coutu's closest industry friends, Chuck Milhem of Valley Recreation, said, "Jean was totally dedicated to the products and the industry."

The two spoke frequently by phone and Milhem always looked for Coutu at the industry shows. Laniel Automatic was one of Valley's oldest distributors, in excess of 50 years. Milhem first knew Coutu over 30 years ago during Milhem's tenure at Brunswick. Their friendship solidified when Milhem became president of Valley.

Jean Coutu early in his career.

Milhem added, "Jean was always a top distributor year after year. He was a hardworking man and a great individual. He was always a gracious host in Montreal. He was one of my favorite people, and I can't say enough good things about him."

Jim Newlander, who retired from Atari two years ago, knew Coutu for 15 years. Newlander recalled, "Jean was a very private person. He was a tremendous competitor and did a great job for both his customers and his suppliers. He was highly respected and will be sorely missed in Canada and the industry in general."

Mary Fujihara of Atari added, "Jean was a longtime distributor for us. He was a true gentleman, always professional, reliable, and true to his word."

Gary Stern of Sega Pinball said, "Our relationship goes way back to my father's day. My father (Sam Stern) was Jean's mentor, and I looked to Jean as one of my mentors. His life was dedicated to this business, and he was active to the end. It is a tremendous loss for his many, many friends. I know I'll miss the conversations we had about my father; they meant a lot to me. He's one of the last vestiges I have of my father."

Another father-son friendship was with Irwin Margold and John Margold. John Margold explained, "When Jean was very young in the business he was sent to Boston to be trained by my dad, Irwin, who had been in the distribution business for as long as there were coin machines. Occasionally Jean would remind me that he learned the industry at my father's knee, just as I had.

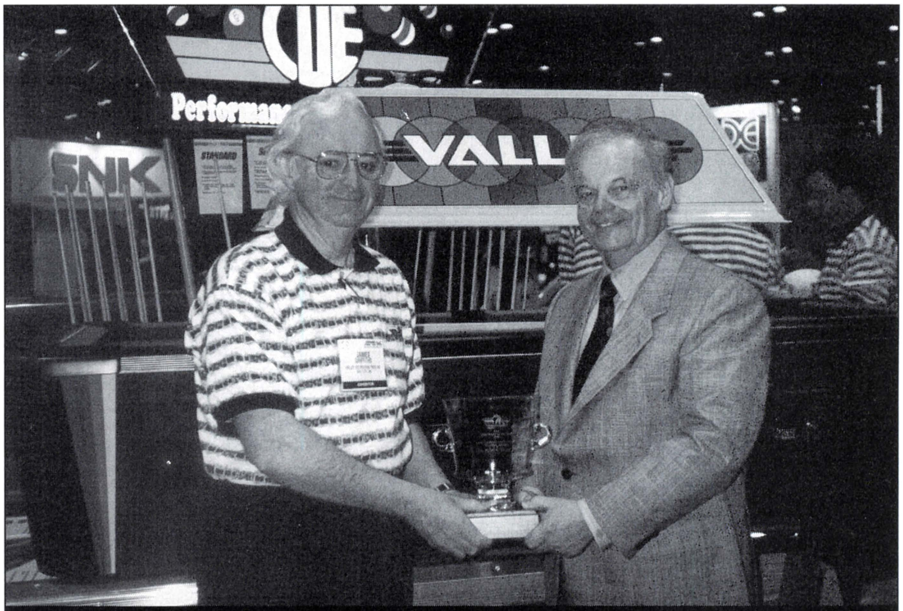
"Jean was one of those men, that whatever he said, you knew it was true. He was sincere, and every time you talked with him you knew his enthusiasm was genuine. He was a wonderful host when you visited him in Montreal. If you made the effort to come see him he made you feel special. He will be sorely missed."

Steve Blattspieler of Capcom also had kind words for Coutu: "He was a wonderful man to do business with. He loved life and this business and he was a lovable guy. He took the time to get to know you. I always felt like I was treated exceptionally well. I'll definitely miss him."

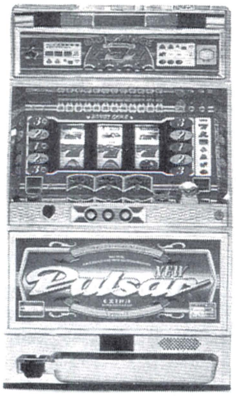
Coutu's funeral was attended only by his closest friends and business associates and included no flowers, at his request. Industry friends who wish to remember him in a special way may consider a donation to the Canadian Cancer Society in his name.

Raymond says the company will continue to operate following the same principles instilled by Coutu.

In Play Meter's March 1996 salute to Laniel Automatic's 60th anniversary Coutu was asked to put his finger on the secret of the company's success. He simply replied, "Be straightforward with your customers. If you feel product is not right for them, tell them to amend their order. Service is very important." ▲



During ACME '96 Jean Coutu (r) accepts Valley's Pool Table Distributor of the Year ('95) award from James Griffiths.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Mayoni Enterprises
Established 1982

TIME FLIES

We all love to thumb through our old family albums. Here's another page to add to the industry's scrapbook.

Welcome
ACME
AMERICAN COIN MACHINE EXPOSITION
1989 AMERICAN COIN MACHINE EXPOSITION RENO, NEVADA

Above: Here's the ribbon cutting ceremony for the 1989 ACME show in Reno with partners AAMA and Play Meter representatives, (l-r): Ray Musci, Jon Brady, Rus Strahan, Bob Fay, Frank Ballouz, Jud Allen (Reno councilman), Carol Lally, Bill Cravens, Valerie Cognevich, Gil Pollock, Steve Kaufman, and Steve Koenigsberg.

Above: The Atari service team a few years ago, (l-r): Robert McKee, Peter Rub, John Hill (yes, that John Hill), and Frank Becker.

TAITO
TAITO
TEST TECH

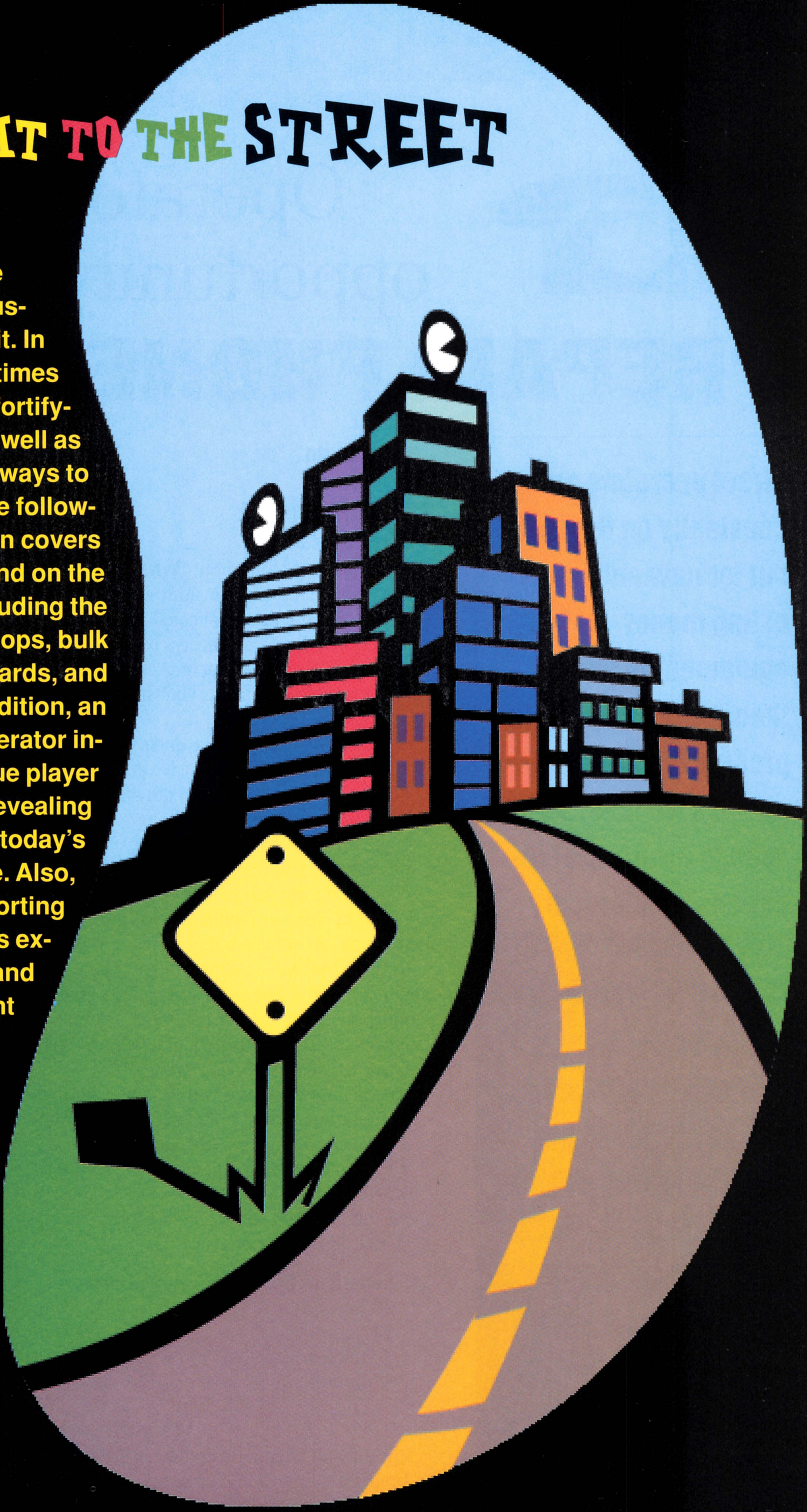
Above: Rene Lopez, Taito's director of customer service in 1981, shows World Wide Distributing's Fred Skor (r) the latest Taito service breakthrough—Test Tech.

Right: Here's Steve Shaffer of Shaffer Distributing working his booth during an early Ohio Coin Machine Association state convention.

Postively No Ball Hangu
Uses Standard 2¼" Cue
Simplified Ball Separato
Light Heavy Duty Legs
Cast Aluminum Level
Larger, Lockable C
Textured Chrom

TAKING IT TO THE STREET

Street operations are the mainstay of the industry, no doubt about it. In these changing times street-wise means fortifying the basics as well as considering new ways to boost revenue. The following 25-page section covers important ground on the street scene, including the value of countertops, bulk vending, phone cards, and retail sales. In addition, an off-the-record operator interview and league player profiles provide revealing perspectives on today's coin-op climate. Also, our monthly "Sporting Edge" features expanded league and tournament coverage.



Operators see new opportunity in selling PREPAID PHONE CARDS

Street operators are constantly on the lookout for new and interesting money-making equipment to add to their routes. One such product is the prepaid phone card that can be seen in a variety of locations from grocery stores to convenience stores. We asked several manufacturers to give us an insight into this opportunity for operators. After you've read what they have to say, you may want to give them a call. We've included phone numbers for your convenience.

David Swann
XCP Inc.
New Port Richey, FL
(813)841-6630

I often hear the question, "What is a phone card?" Invariably, the next question is, "Why should I consider a vending machine for selling phone cards?" The answer is not as complicated as some might think.

When you don't have access to a phone in your name your options for long distance and local calls decrease significantly, unless you have a very trusting friend or relative who thinks you will really pay them back when the bill comes in.

Here are the options:

- **Call Collect**–Expensive and sometimes not an option
- **Third party call**–Expensive and sometimes requires verification
- **Pay cash**–Expensive and only at pay phones
- **Credit card**–Expensive "bong" charge and usually three minute minimum billing
- **Carry a cellular phone**–Expensive

A quick phone call to say, "I'm running a little behind. I will be there by 4 p.m." might cost as much as $2 with any of the above options. As you can see, the options are not appealing.

Now that we have defined the problem, the solution of a prepaid phone card becomes clearer. The call that formerly cost $2 can cost as little as 10 cents depending on the phone card provider. When a phone card is purchased, all taxes, long distance, and international telephone charges are prepaid.

Phone cards are advantageous when:

1.) You are away from your home or business phone
2.) You don't have a home or business phone
3.) You don't have any change
4.) You have change but want to decrease the cost of a call
5.) You are at a hotel and want to decrease the cost of a call
6.) You have a credit card but want to decrease the cost of a short phone call

Here is a comparison chart:

Length of Call	Phone Card	Credit	Coin
30 Seconds	$ .125	$ 1.66	$1.66 and up
1 Minute	$ .25	$ 1.66	$1.66 and up
3 Minutes	$ .75	$ 1.66	$1.66 and up
5 Minutes	$ 1.25	$ 2.19	$2.19 and up

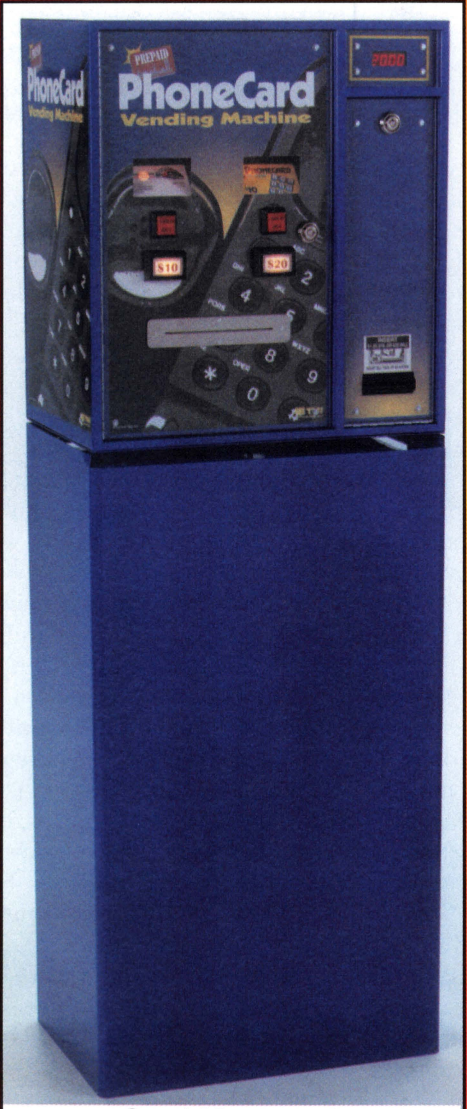
Why the savings?

Virtually all telephone credit cards have a three-minute minimum, charge an up-front surcharge, and charge tax. They must pass on to you: billing, bad debt, and fraud costs in order to be profitable.

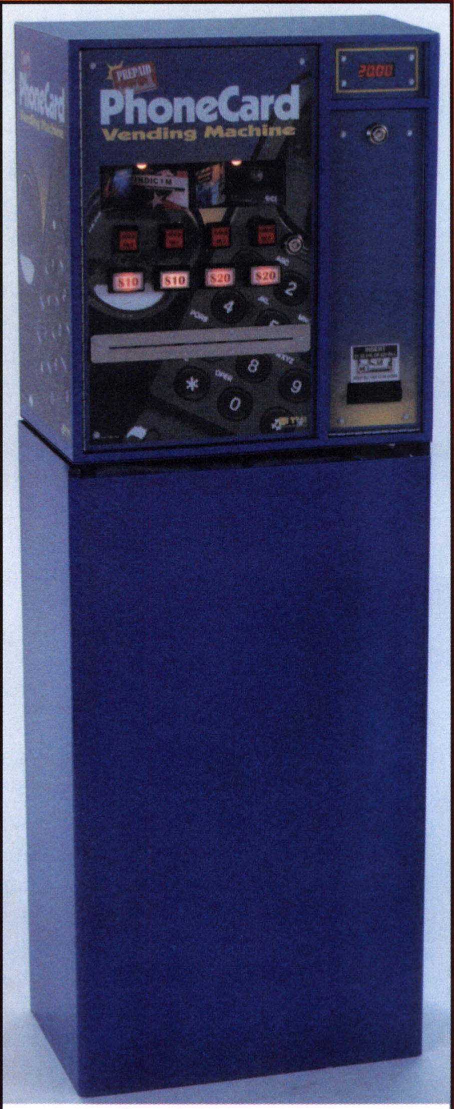
Prepaid Phone Card Dispensing Machines

You Can Count On Us For:

- Quality
- Dependability
- State of the Art
- High Security
- High-Speed Belt Drive Delivery System
- Attractiveness
- First-Rate Service
- Consistent Parts
- More New Products


2000
PREPAID
PhoneCard
Vending Machine
$10
$20

Card Master - 2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PREPAID
PhoneCard
Vending Machine
$10
$10
$20
$20

Card Master - 4

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Even a grocery store sees profits in offering its customers prepaid phone cards right alongside of the stamp machine.

BREAUX MART
has
PHONE CARDS
ENTER
Under 18
We Card
No Tobacco

It never hurts to promote a service. In this case, a sign proclaims the availability of phone cards as customers enter the store.

The phone card is prepaid and offers significant savings vs. AT&T, MCI, Sprint, and other telephone company credit cards as it does not have this additional cost and can therefore pass the savings on to you as lower phone time charges. In addition, many credit card companies charge full price (no discounts) for their use.

If you have ever used change to pay for a long distance call, you may remember the vast difference in pricing at different phones. A minority of the pay phone companies have taken advantage of the public and the public does not forget. Unfortunately, even the fairly priced pay phone providers are unfairly judged. A phone card minimizes the risk and almost always saves money instead of using change.

David Swann of EXP with the company's Model 5004 Phone Card Vendor.

PHONE CARDS
PHONE CARDS

The market for phone cards is varied. The statement that "Phone cards are only used by the poor who can't afford phones" is simply not true. Many cards are sold to frugal business people, high-income travelers, and well-to-do truckers who have, but choose not to use, their credit cards for financial reasons.

We need to concentrate on solving the problem of the potential user to figure out where the best location is. It could be those with income and no credit. It could also be the college student, the businessman, the trucker, the tourist, the son, the daughter, etc.

The old saying in sales is, "Solve a problem and make sure that they can pay for it." Truckers are a natural for this. They have a problem, and they have plenty of money to pay for the solution. That is why sales are so good at truck stops.

Convention centers also do well; so do convenience stores, airports, bus/train centers, hotels/motels, college campuses, public libraries, pay phone installations, car rental agencies, campgrounds/RV parks, military bases, public schools, private schools, marinas, resorts, casinos, and prisons.

Phone cards can be very profitable, particularly when compared to other forms of vending. A gross margin of 35-50 percent is typical. Due to the high dollar value of the cards, if you sell 100 cards, you have around $1,500 of gross sales. At a 40 percent margin, your gross profit is $600. After the profit is split with the location, you still have $300 in your pocket. We have many locations that do that, and more, in a week! Think how many candy bars you would have to sell to make $300.

Why should vending machines be used instead of over-the-counter sales? The advantage of a vending machine is that the location does not have to worry about inventory cost, inventory control, shrinkage, exposure, and more efficient use of employees. In some instances, machines can be placed where there are no over-the-counter locations. Examples are: airports, train stations, hotels, and schools.

Most machines today are simple to operate and simple to use. The best machines offer credit card acceptance and bank notes. The next level down should be capable of accepting any denomination of currency as well as being able to dispense multiple cards chosen by the user.

The simplest of machines may only be able to dispense one type of card, but should certainly be able to accept multiple denominations of currency. It is important to realize that the phone

Doritos
Frito Lays
Fritos
O'Boisies
Phone Card
Skittles
Hershey's
Crunch
M&M

A bag of pretzels, a candy bar, or a prepaid phone card are available from one machine from VendTel.

card market is not entirely for the poor. Truckers are the largest users of phone cards and they are not poor!

The use of MasterCard and Visa has drastically increased sales in other similar industries such as Internet time vending. A phone card vending machine that accepts MasterCard and Visa should be considered at truck stops and larger hotels.

With the varied types of applications, you should choose a manufacturer that offers a wide variety of machines from large to small and with ultra high-security to moderate security. The "one machine fits all" concept does not fit in the broad market of phone card vending.

I see the next generation of phone cards being activated at the point of purchase. This greatly increases the options of what is sold while decreasing the liability. Many over-the-counter locations are already using this method and vending machines will not be too far behind. Due to the increased sophistication of the electronics, firmware control, and associated R&D, manufacturers that only do assembly will be at a distinct disadvantage.

Overall, the growth of the phone card industry is amazing considering the limited education the public has about phone cards. Talk to 10 people on the street and chances are that none of them will know what a phone card is. Add the lack of knowledge to the lack of trust and it is a miracle any phone cards have sold at all.

Greater regulation and the passage of time will continue to increase the trust, knowledge, and acceptance of prepaid phone cards, leading to the development of a large and stable market. I predict that the constant growth will continue for many years with no end in sight.

Bill Fuller
Technik Mfg. Inc.
Columbus, NE
(402)564-3191

Much of the current boom in the phone card industry can be attributed to the convenience of the cards. Dispensing machines make the phone card even more convenient and provide additional security at the same time. Dispensing from a machine is like having a salesperson ready when the consumer is ready to purchase.

Consumers today are accustomed to purchasing from vending machines because of the convenience. Most of our customers have stated that the vending machine usually doubles, if not triples, the sale of cards compared to selling them over-the-counter. Selling through a vending machine also offers security. Total accountability for cash and cards are provided by the internal accounting system of the vending machine. Technik has manufactured more than 2,000 phone card vending machines in the past 18 months. Phone card vending provides an excellent opportunity for operators.

Here's a quick history of Technik. We are an original manufacturer of gaming, promotional, and prepaid phone card machines. Incorporated on Jan. 1, 1989, Technik has a large share of the vending machine market as it relates to the selling of charitable gaming and lottery tickets. As a result of this, the company has designed, produced, sold, serviced, and continues to maintain over 5,500 machines throughout the United States and has recently moved into some foreign markets. The experience gained by Technik in related industries places it in an excellent position to gain a large share of the prepaid phone card dispenser market.

Save Money!
MCI PrePaid℠
Phone Card
$5
13 units
MCI PrePaid
$5
PhoneCard
VendTel
THIS MCI PREPAID PHONE CARD WILL SAVE UP TO 80% ON YOUR DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL CALLS!
VendTel

This phone card is attached to a potato chip-sized card and displayed in a glass-front vending machine.

All of our dispensing products utilize the same dispensing concept, our unique belt drive delivery system. This mechanism has proven its reliability by vending over 1,000 tickets per day. Handling that kind of volume reliably should make the phone card market seem like a slow day at the office! In fact, the reliability will increase with the phone cards because they are more consistent in their thickness. Our belt drive system will deliver prepaid cards quickly, efficiently, and without damage. The mechanism makes adjusting for card thickness a snap. Other mechanisms may not offer these advantages and should be carefully evaluated before a decision is made. As a true manufacturer, Technik has total control on the quality of its products.

Technik prides itself on its technical capability and actively seeks to improve its machines. As the name suggests, Technik specializes in solving problems, from performance to marketing. This desire and ability to improve has led to our company motto, "success through customer satisfaction."

Technik has its primary manufacturing facility in the heartland of the

VendTel answers 10 frequently asked questions

How do phone cards work?

The concept is simple. The user pays in advance for long distance service and is given a prepaid phone card similar to a credit card. The card is coded with the amount of time purchased and a PIN number. To use the card, the purchaser dials the 800 number to access the central computer, then enters the PIN number for identification, and then enters the phone number to be called.

What type of telephone is needed?

A touch-tone phone. Phone cards are easy to operate with all instructions on the back.

Who uses phone cards?

Millions of people. Strong users include recent immigrants, truckers, students, foreign visitors, business travelers, and military personnel. Anyone without a calling card or wanting to save money is a good candidate.

How much money can consumers save on prepaid phone cards?

Consumers can generally save from 30-70 percent over collect, third party, hotel-placed calls, and major calling cards.

What denominations sell best in vending machines?

Lower-priced denominations are selling best right now, but sales are expected to move to higher denominations over time as the public becomes more aware of the cost savings of phone cards. Best selling denominations include $5 for the initial purchase, $10 for the occasional user, and $20 for the heavy user and repeat buyer.

How much profit can I expect from a phone card?

You can expect from three to 15 times more profit per card when compared to a typical snack item. While phone card margins are a bit lower due to the cost of the carrier minutes, the overall selling price is five to 20 times greater.

What are the margins?

Margins may vary with the volume and denominations sold. Typically they are between 25 and 30 percent. It is important to note that higher margins and low priced minutes may signal trouble. Enough profit must be taken by a phone card company and the time carrier to provide customer service, to pay all required taxes, and to insure ongoing quality service.

Are phone cards taxed and tariffed?

Yes! Both federal and state laws govern sales of phone cards. Be sure the carrier you select is tariffed in every state and pays all FCC and state tariffs. Thankfully, the government is cracking down on unscrupulous phone card companies. If taxes are not paid, your cards could be turned off any moment. Choose nationally recognized phone card carriers and distribution companies.

What about sales tax?

With a few exceptions, states regard phone cards as a service and not a product, so sales tax is not collected. You should check with your phone card company to confirm any geographic restrictions. The telecommunication taxes and tariffs should be included in the wholesale price of the card.

How do I know a phone card will work and that the taxes are paid?

A phone card is only as good as the carrier that stands behind it. Be sure to get confirmation of the carrier of your cards and work with companies you trust. In 1996 alone millions of phone cards were turned off, leaving consumers fuming and distributors stranded.

United States. The advantages of manufacturing here include excellent work ethics of the people, low cost of power, low cost of real estate, and proximity of suppliers. For these reasons, Technik is able to control overhead costs and pass the savings along to our customers.

Jed Forman
Leisure Entertainment Ltd.
Lynbrook, NY
(516)593-5050

Over the past year the vending machine industry has taken great strides into the prepaid calling card market. Companies like AT&T, Sprint, MCI, and other major companies in the telecommunications industry are more actively involved in the distribution of prepaid calling cards than ever before.

These companies have seen the potential in distributing these cards from vending machines rather than over-the-counter. Selling cards from a vending machine—like other products—has a better point of sale, more product control, and most importantly, less chance of fraud. With a vending machine the security risk is far less than over-the-counter selling. There is much more stock and cash control and the accountability is far greater.

Why locations are more likely to sell prepaid calling cards from vending machines rather than by purchasing prepaid calling cards from a distributor and selling them over-the-counter:

1.) Most prepaid calling card companies require payment up front.

2.) If a distributor goes out of business, the location is held responsible for any refunds to their customers.

3.) Selling prepaid calling cards over-the-counter carries a much greater risk for theft by employees, etc.

4.) Because of the high price ticket on prepaid calling cards, locations must lay out substantial amounts of money for inventory.

5.) More and more retail outlets are leaning towards vending machines to sell prepaid calling cards than ever before.

6.) Selling prepaid calling cards through vending machines outsells over-the-counter selling by at least three to one.

Locations will accept between 15-20 percent profit of the face value of a prepaid calling card vended from a machine rather than the 30-35 percent profit they would get by purchasing cards from a distributor and reselling them over-the-counter because they have less exposure from theft and probably an increase in sales by as much as 60 percent.

An operator should approach a location with a positive attitude and a business-like manner. He should explain to the owner that he, too, is running a business and must also have a bottom line and make a profit. The operator should also explain that just like the soda or candy machine that the location may have installed by an independent operator, the location should sell prepaid phone cards from a vending machine in the same way.

Leisure Entertainment's model CD1000X is a second generation model from a company with over 35 years of experience in all aspects of both manufacturing and distributing vending machines.

Will McClatchy
VendTel Inc.
Greenbrae, CA
(415)381-6851

The question often asked is, "why do people buy prepaid phone cards?" The answer is that they save up to 80 percent on their long distance phone calls; no coins are needed; it eliminates excessive charges of hotel phones, collect calls, and pay phones; no credit card or application is needed; there's 24-hour customer service; there's no monthly billing; and you can use them on virtually any touch-tone phone.

VendTel is the only North American provider of phone cards packaged for sale in glass-front snack food machines. The company has offered $5 and $10 MCI prepaid cards specially packaged in potato chip package sizes since November 1996. New product introductions include a candy bar-sized phone card and $10 and $20 Hola! phone cards targeted for Spanish language consumers calling to Mexico. Vending operator margins range from 35-51 percent.

The initial results after nine months of sales with over 60 vending operators and over 300 vending machines suggests that none of the primary technical and security issues are of major concern to vending operators selling phone cards through glass-front vending machines. Change bank depletion, reliability of dispensing phone cards, and the threat of driver or consumer theft were cited in initial surveys of vending operators.

By far the biggest obstacle to success is obtaining adequate inventory turnover through proper selection of location, pricing, and design of marketing materials. There are ways to address each issue. Only by getting in and testing have we discovered what works. Our existing research shows the following:

1.) Change banks will deplete in less than five percent of machines with phone cards.

2.) Cards dispense reliably.

3.) If machines are tipped, a few cards can be shaken loose, but rarely.

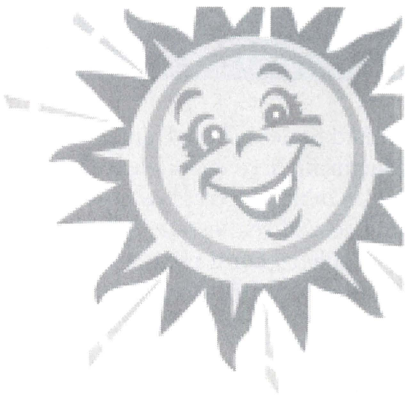
4.) Machines in secure locations will not be vandalized or broken into.

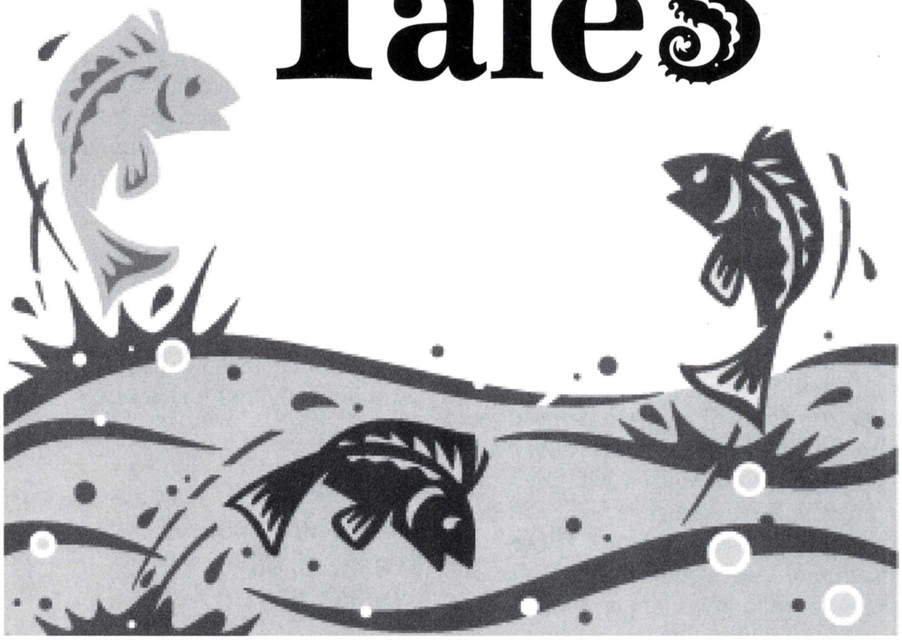
The main concern is inventory and how to identify locations that are likely to sell phone cards in strong numbers. The good news is that phone cards are much more profitable per unit, so a vending operator can sell 1/4 to 1/20 as many phone cards as food items to come out ahead. A $5 card is generally only five times more profitable than a potato chip while a $10 card is commonly 20 times more profitable than a candy bar.

Initial results with the first MCI prepaid products, priced at 35-38 cents per minute, generated improvements in slot profits to approximately 30 percent of the machine tried. The top 10 percent of those machines saw very impressive improvements, from 30 percent to more than 200 percent improvement in slot profits when phone cards were placed.

Because VendTel sends cards out on consignment, operators with poor results were able to send cards back with no penalty. New MCI prepaid cards priced more aggressively appear to be significantly improving average inventory turnover. ▲

Fish Tales





I just got back from a long weekend in the Bahamas snorkeling, swimming, and enjoying the beauty of the clean, clear water and the many reefs that surround those islands. You know, it hit me as I was snorkeling off Green Turtle Bay and looking at the multitude of different fish in the azure waters of the Atlantic that we're just like them in a way. We're various shapes, sizes, and colors with various levels of aggression and curiosity. It's much like street operators, who are different yet have a common thread.

There is the basic variety, the roll-up-your-sleeves kind of operator—**George Grunt**. He's the one who chomps on cigars, wears yesterday's T-shirt, and sports a growth of stubble. His games and locations reflect a certain lackluster genre that mirrors his existence. He's content to work the games until they drop with no regard to their appearance or player appeal. Just give him his share of the gross and he will doggy-paddle away.

Then there's the flashy operator—**Paul Parrotfish**. He'll dazzle you with his brilliance and quick moves. But he's the guy who'll disappear into the coral when you most need him, like supporting his state association. He's not really interested in the well-being of his accounts. He's much more interested in baffling them with fast talk and leading them down the primrose path thinking they have the best until they find out that's he's very much like Billy Blowfish and Percy Puffin—all hype and no substance. An operator like this is a flash in the pan. You might say they'd make a good fish fry, but bony as hell.

Who doesn't know **Charley Tuna**? Good old Charley keeps trying to be King of the Reef. He spends his time swimming in circles but accomplishing nothing. He is unimpressive to other operators and cannot hold onto his locations and give them the attention they deserve. He's like a fish out of water, so to speak, when it comes to knowing how to operate in this business. It's a safe bet he won't be too successful in the long run. He doesn't believe in contracts and as a result loses locations to others on a regular basis.

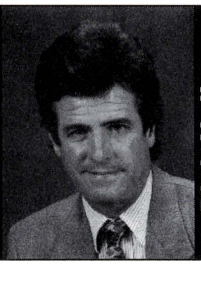
Barry Barracuda typifies those sly, crafty operators we've all run into. He's dangerous, slippery, aggressive, unscrupulous, and should be avoided at all costs. He'll have no qualms in running gray area games in your location. When the going gets rough and law enforcement is at the door, he'll slip through the cracks and disappear into deeper waters before you know he's gone.

Fred Flounder is a laid back, gentle operator. He swims around catching the crumbs that fall from above. He's harmless, content to operate in his sphere with whatever comes his way. He's a plodder and has probably been around for many years. Status quo is what he lives by. Somehow he has survived the ups and downs of the industry.

Fred's buddy, **Stan Stingray**, also lives on the bottom and has been around for a long time. His route covers much more territory than Fred's because he's more of a go-getter. He will not bother anyone unless you try to step on him.

No group would be complete without its own **Sam Shark**. Watch the reef clear when this bulldozer of an operator shows up. This guy has powerful money backers and big business muscle to make the rules as he sees fit. He runs his operation like no one else. Is he successful? Yes. Is he the kind of street operator that is good for this industry? No. Most operators hate him. He buys his way into whatever it is he wants with no regard to the location owner or the location's best interests.

QUARTER
NOTES



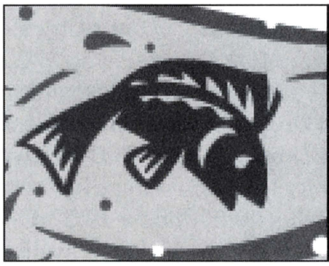
Rich Holley

Heck, if he wants to he'll buy the building that houses the location and kick the location owner out on a whim. Sam does not live on the reef and does not pay taxes there. He comes from some far off ocean and is allowed to bully the locals at the reef because he has very skillfully maneuvered around all the regulations. Sam Shark has few redeeming values.

Another very unpopular species in the reef community is the **Government Fish**. They can easily be identified because they are lazy and out of shape. They produce nothing nor create anything but waste. Another sure way to identify this species is at precisely 5 p.m. you will see schools of them leaving for home. Large schools can also be seen at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. just swimming around during what they call break time. It's required by law. Government Fish spend their very short work day trying to take away as much as possible from the other fish. This is the reason that you will always find the other fish still working after 5 p.m. They must make up what was taken from them by the Government Fish. It is rumored that Government Fish and Sam Shark, from the far off ocean, have a thing going on.

Dave Dolphin saves the day. He's the protector of the reef and all that live within. He's the level-headed leader of the group, willing to give his all to making the industry a respected one. He's not only a contributing member of the national association, but he's an available worker in the state association of which he's a long-time member. He's a reliable, honest, hardworking businessman who treats his locations with respect and dignity. It is a pleasure to do business with this operator. He is clearly a pillar of the underwater community.

Put it all together and you have an aquarium of creatures, each with his own unique characteristics and individuality while surviving in the ocean of the business of being a street operator. Some big, some small, some bright, some dull, some aggressive, some slow, some a little of everything. It's a big world out there. I guess you could say that we're all just little fish in a big ocean. Happy snorkeling! ▲



"I guess you could say that we're all just little fish in a big ocean."

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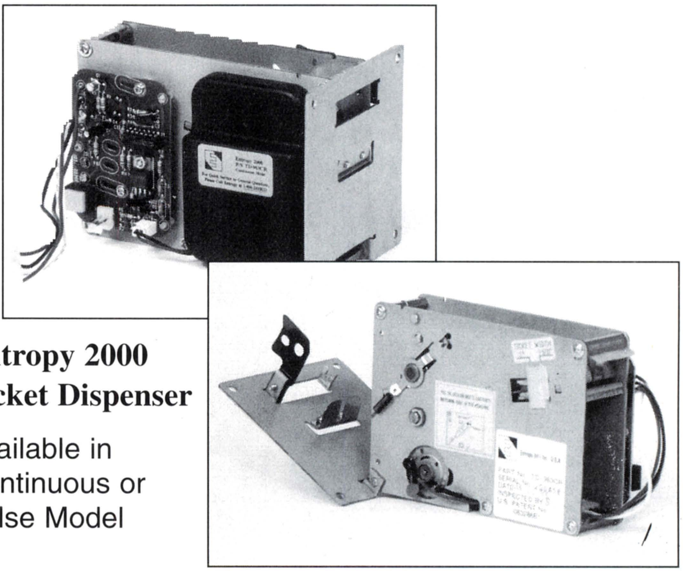

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Continuous or
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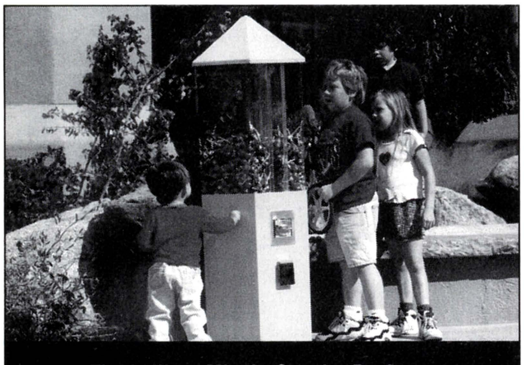
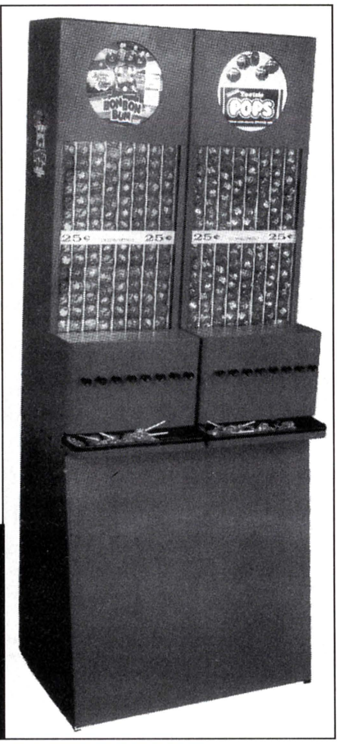
e-mail entropyusa @ sprynet.com

"Who vends lollipops, baby?"

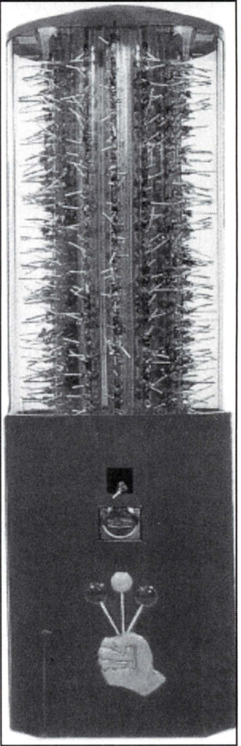


The *Lollipop Mine* by Creative Products.



Vend-A-Pop Mfg.'s double capacity *VP-2001*.

Pop Drop Mfg.'s large *Pop Drop* machine.



Who can forget Telly Savalas' lollipop-loving police detective from the "Kojak" TV series of the '70s? He proved that adults can still be cool eating candy usually favored by children.

Lollipops are perennial favorites and new generations continue to discover this sweet treat. Parents and grandparents also harbor warm feelings for lollipops so it's no wonder that the candy has found its way into bulk vending machines.

Pop Drop Mfg. of Coconut Creek, Fla., Creative Products of Goodyear, Ariz., and Vend-A-Pop Mfg. of Brooklyn, N.Y., are companies that offer vending units that dispense lollipops.

At Pop Drop Mfg. two different machines are available. The larger *Pop Drop* unit holds 500 well-wrapped Colombina lollipops in the carousel and has storage for 500 in the cabinet. Dimensions are 72" high x 19.5" wide x 19.5" deep and weighs 140 lbs. The smaller unit is 44" high x 11.5" wide x 12" deep, weighs 35 lbs., and has a capacity of 217 lollipops. Both machines feature Beaver coin mechs and 18-gauge steel construction.

Company officials say the machines fit in the same locations where you find traditional gumball machines. Smaller children go for the lollipops, they say, and it's a nice alternative to gum.

Creative Products just introduced its *Lollipop Mine* that allows operators to load over 2,000 lollipops in less than five minutes. Creative uses a prize bay design similar to cranes instead of a column-style vending arrangement.

According to Hugh Davis of Creative, "We found that operators were looking for new and exciting items to complement the spiral type machines that have been out in the field for the last four or five years. We put together the feedback from our customers, went back to our R & D department, and came up with *Lollipop Mine*."

The six-sided machine stands 4'5" high x 21" deep and weighs 90 lbs. Cabinet construction is 18-gauge steel; the color is bright yellow with blue highlights.

Vend-A-Pop Mfg. brought out its *VP-2001* lollipop machine two years ago and now has 2,000 machines on location. It is sold in single, double, or triple models, and dispenses either 200 Columbina Bubblegum Pops or 240 Tootsie Pops.

Says Bob Mankin, president of Vend-A-Pop, "The uniqueness of our machine is that you can cartridge-feed the lollipops into the machine, thereby saving much time. The product sells so well that you must continually load the machines. Our method saves time; in under a minute you can stock 200 lollipops." What types of locations are suggested? "Schools are excellent. Almost any location does well as long as you have good traffic," advises Mankin.

The *VP-2001* is made from 18-gauge steel with a Lexan front panel and powder-coated textured paint in a choice of red, white, blue, and black. It can be used five creative ways: on a countertop, standard pipe rack, single base, double base, or triple base.

The suggested vend for all these machines is 25 cents. Companies supply both the machines and the lollipops.

For more details, call Pop Drop Mfg., (888)230-7444; Creative Products, (800)201-9908; and Vend-A-Pop Mfg., (718)596-1700. ▲

> ***"Almost any location does well as long as you have good traffic."***

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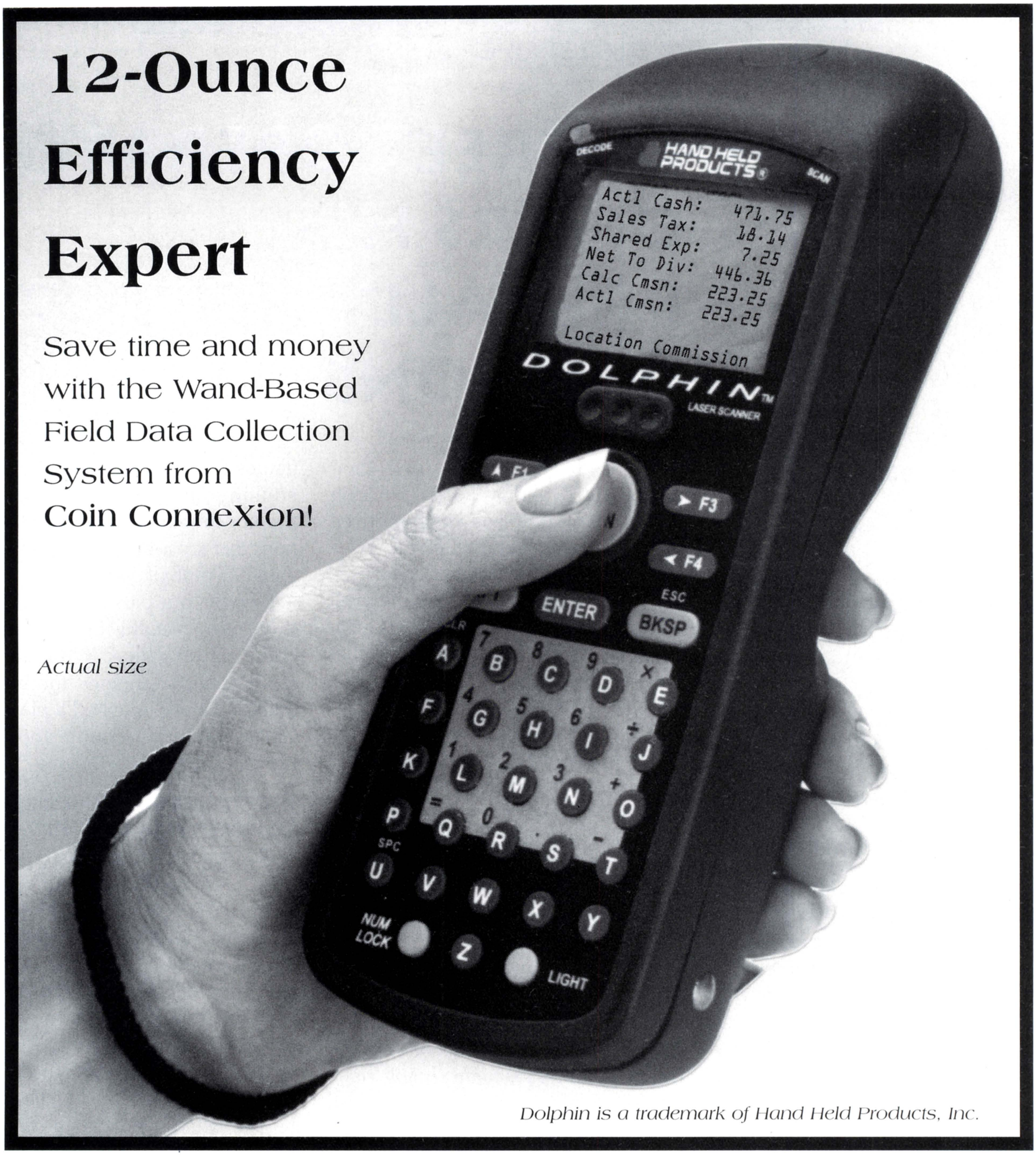
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A STREET OPERATOR OFFERS HIS BRUTALLY HONEST OPINIONS

Is there such a thing as a typical, average street operator? We were hoping to find that ellusive entity. We don't know if we did find him, but this operator had some thought-provoking comments, but did not want his name attached. We decided to run it anyway because he echoes other comments we've heard from a number of operators. Maybe we did find a typical, average street operator after all.

How long have you been in the coin-op business?

My father started the business with several jukeboxes and worked the route into one with hundreds of pieces of equipment. My son is working with me now, but things are much harder than they were when I started. The equipment costs are outrageous. I couldn't buy some of this stuff if I sold my house, my wife, and my kids! And even if I could afford it, my locations are not the type to support it. Can you picture in your mind a typical bar with something like an *Alpine Racer*?

As a street operator, what are some of the toughest issues you're facing?

I touched on it in that last question when I mentioned the cost of equipment. It's mind-boggling when you think that one game costs as much as you paid for your first house! I have a budget that I figure I'll spend on new equipment each year. I used to be able to allot enough to replace about 25 percent of my route and still have a profitable bottom line. Now, I still have a budget for new equipment but it's barely enough to replace 10 percent of my route and, honestly, I don't feel it's enough. But then again, what's there to buy?

Do you feel that the current crop of equipment was designed for locations other than street locations?

You bet. I'm sure any operator will agree with that. There's this huge interest and focus on family places. Manufacturers must think that these FECs are the only ones buying equipment the way they cater to them. But the solution is that if no one buys their equipment, hey, they'll just open their own places. Have you really noticed who is taking over the FECs? As a street operator, I'm not that concerned about manufacturers having the most elaborate family entertainment locations, but when will they decide that they are the only ones able to place equipment anywhere?

But you asked about equipment. My answer is that there is very little equipment that I can even consider buying. And what I can't understand is that there are thousands upon thousands of street locations and probably just one or two thousand FECs. Why don't manufacturers at least give us games we can use even if it's not as important as the big games. Everything costs more, including the basic things like jukeboxes and pool tables. However, I can justify those costs because I'll have a jukebox for many, many years and my pool tables last a lifetime. So I'm OK with that, but let's face it, my locations need more.

Do you have locations that don't want videos or pins anymore?

I did have quite a few locations that only wanted a jukebox, pool table, and maybe a dart game. But now I have places that want countertops and I saw a wall game at a recent show that takes me back to 20 years ago when wall games were popular. I'm planning on adding some of those. But to answer the question, there are very few locations that are asking for a regular video game or pinball. And I'm not sure exactly why, but part of it must be that there are so many fighting, kill 'em, chop 'em up games. When there are more realistic themes for bars and adult locations, maybe I'll place them. In the meantime, countertops are on my list of what I'll be buying.

If you had to change something about the industry what would it be?

I'd love to see an industry without a lot of backbiting and lack of honesty. I used to depend on my distributor to guide me in the right direction, but after too many "this is the best game since *Pac-Man*" I realized it's every man for himself. I used to work with one distributor but no more. I shop around, buying more than ever from classified ads and outside distributors. I laugh when my distributor tells me I shouldn't buy out of my territory. I buy so little from my local distributor, I'm surprised he even remembers my name. And you know what? It's even more surprising to me how little effort he exerts to get me back as a customer.

Is there more competition than there used to be?

Maybe not more, but certainly dif-

> *"The equipment costs are outrageous. I couldn't buy some of this stuff if I sold my house, my wife, and my kids!"*

ferent. There have been some smaller operators bought out by larger operations, and I'm sure that will continue. And I've seen a change in attitude when it comes to locations. It used to be that operators would do anything to get a location, even giving that place a bigger commission. But no one can afford to do that anymore no matter how much they want a location. I remember when operators would give a bar a cigarette machine and a hefty loan. Then the bar owner simply paid off the loan with his share of the profits of the cigarette machine.

Losing revenue from cigarette machines has hurt my business tremendously. I've talked to other operators who are hurt and some who haven't seen much of a difference, but most depended on them somewhat. I still can't believe what has been said about vending machines and kids. It is a lie that's been embraced to look like the cigarette companies are really putting forth an effort to keep kids off smokes. Those of us who depended on cigarette machines for our livelihood find it outrageous. I think I read that less than two percent of children bought cigarettes from a machine, and here they've gone and nearly put some of us out of business. Government at work is not always a pleasant sight.

Are the state and national associations doing enough to address street operator issues?

That's funny. Why? Because the national association, AMOA, has turned into one big political nightmare. People who want to get to the top simply find enough support and there they are no matter who they have to stomp on. What's going on now is sad. It's sad because AMOA was an organization where a small operator could make an impact, have a say, and be treated with respect. That's no longer true, and the infighting and decisions are turning away the very people who are the foundation of that association.

I think the upcoming AMOA is going to be an eye-opener. I doubt that many street operators will attend. They profess to be the operators friend but are so cocky that they've alienated a lot of us. There are other shows that give me what I need in the way of seeing equipment and attending seminars. When did AMOA give up being the operators' association and become a giant political blob going absolutely nowhere?

RAMPAGE
FIRETRAP

It's a street operator's job to keep players like this coming back.

The state associations have a hard time. I respect the one in my state that tries to keep us informed, but there are too many issues and not enough time or money. I support them in their efforts and always will, but some operators are figuring they'll save a buck and abandon the association. Pretty soon the association will abandon them and it won't be until then that they'll realize what was being done on their behalf.

Are there new opportunities for street operators?

There are always new opportunities. Right now I'd say that it may be harder to find them, but then you look even harder. I've seen some of my fellow operators diversify into the home market, selling everything anyone could ever want for home game rooms. It's funny but I can sell an old video game, say a *Pac-Man*, to someone who wants it for their home and they're happy to pay what I'm asking. No operator I know would even consider buying an old game.

Talking about opportunities, leagues and tournaments shouldn't be overlooked. Sure it's work, but operators better get used to that word. Work, really hard work, is the name of the game nowadays and if you're going to be working harder than ever, why not direct some of those efforts to something that will increase your bottom line. I'm not into it in a big way, but even the leagues I'm running have made a difference.

I've been trying to figure out what's going on with Microsoft. It seems that it could really be positive for street operators because they are predicting more lower cost kits from more designers. It sounds too good to be true, but I'm hoping.

What would you say to other operators?

One of the problems with operators is that they don't realize that they are important to the industry. They are in their own little worlds clinging to too many habits that don't work anymore. I get so mad when I see street operators let their businesses fall by the wayside without even trying to save them. Yes, that's what they're doing. I've seen small operators who operate right next to the large fun complexes with go-karts, minigolf, etc. and do a great business. Why? Because they address every detail and make adjustments. I'm talking about details like how your collectors are dressed, how clean the trucks are, how well maintained the equipment is, changing music on the jukebox, re-felting the pool tables, checking the cues and chalk, etc. I could go on and on. But the point is that details are what makes or breaks any business. ▲

TAKING IT TO THE STREET

RETAIL SALES

HOME OWNERS REPRESENT *growing niche market*

Home owners are crossing the thresholds of coin-op companies in greater numbers as they seek to create entertainment havens at home. The response to this demand can be seen in both small scale displays and fancy showrooms. Several companies with different approaches share their experiences.

AMA DISTRIBUTORS

One of the first companies to see the value of sales to home owners was AMA Distributors of Metairie, La. According to company president Bob Nims, "We recognized how the home billiard industry was part of our business long ago. Around 1968 we decided to get into the home table market with Brunswick tables and it went on from there."

AMA became the leading Brunswick dealer, honored in 1977 as a member of the Brunswick Crest Club. AMA was also one of the first companies in the country to do coin-op pool tournaments. AMA even sponsored a pool tournament at the New Orleans Home Show, which spread the word locally to home owners.

AMA recently enlarged its showroom facilities where you can browse through 25 pool tables, obtain instructional videos and all types of pool supplies, plus complete your home recreation room with everything from deluxe card tables to wall decorations.

Eleven different brands of cues are in stock: Brunswick, Dufferin, Huebler, Joss, J. Pechauer, Longoni, Maximum, Meucci, McDermott, Quetec, and Valley.

It's easy to see why pool is so popular, says Mary Ann Brauninger of AMA. "The game does not require athletic skill; it involves strategy and angles and stimulates the mind. It's something the whole family can enjoy."

The word "family" is the key. Brauninger adds, "Parents are concerned about where their children are. They want their children at home and want to know who their friends are."

> *Operators and distributors are generating an additional stream of revenue by supplying old and new games and accessories to home buyers eager to fulfill a dream.*

Then: In the early '70s AMA Distributors invested in a large showroom at its St. Charles Ave. location.

AMA general manager Jim Pietrangelo agrees, "People know kids are going to hang out at someone's house and they want it to be their house."

While Christmas time is the height of interest for this equipment, AMA has had a very good year so far with consistent sales.

Customers range from the man who's building his dream billiard room to the average person who always wanted a pool table. In the latter's case, if the husband has convinced his wife to give up a room for the table, she gets to choose the style and color. Styles run from contemporary to hand-carved models available in four sizes and a choice of felt colors such as tan, gray, rust, blue, and a variety of green shades. For the home owner, this is a major purchase.

From left: Denise Jordy, Andrea Luquette, and Lisa Brown arrange stock at AMA Distributors' enlarged showroom.

McDermott
BRUNSWICK

SOUTHEAST GAME BROKERS

"I think that everyone has a dream of owning their own jukebox for sure, and their own pool table," says Rich Holley of Southeast Game Brokers in Tampa. Fla., adding, "Coin-op games have a certain mystique to the average person, who has a different view than those of us in the business. If they can afford games, they like to have them in their homes."

Home game sales have been a sideline for Holley and his wife Bev for 17 years. They both agree that "in these days it's extra important."

Holley connects such sales to what he sees as the hardest part of operating video games: disposing of them after their useful life on location. While auctions are one viable way to reduce the number of old games in the warehouse, auction attendees often come with a garage sale mentality. Home buyers have a higher perceived value of the games and will pay more to have an oldie such as *Centipede* in their family room.

Certain times of the year are more active for sales to home buyers, Christmas in particular. Says Holley, "We get ready for the holidays because what happens is that people impulsively show up and want a game now (as in "How fast can I get it?"), usually as a surprise gift. They don't plan ahead."

Holley has a large ad in the Tampa Yellow Pages and a Web site directed to individuals looking to purchase games for their homes. He says he gets a huge amount of inquiries for old games such as *Defender* and *Millipede.* He also gets calls from people who want to sell their games because they are either moving, are tired of the games, or the games are not working. He jumps at the opportunity because he can purchase them at a reasonable price and his in-house technicians can make them work. If they have been in someone's home for years they are usually in good condition.

Other customers include sports personalities and businessmen with a penchant for games who are looking

Everything from cue balls to instructional videos can be found in the cases at AMA Distributors.

Now: In the Metairie, La., headquarters a wider range of tables and accessories are available.

for current titles, as well as serious collectors. Holley also gets "a kazillion calls for slot machines." In Florida the antique models are legal to have in the home.

CHILTON VENDING & BILLIARDS

Pool tables, lights, jukeboxes, pinballs, posters, popcorn machines, and game tables are well displayed in a 14,000-square-foot showroom at the company's headquarters in Wichita, Kan., where even the outdoor lights have billiard ball covers.

Retail sales have been a staple at Chilton Vending for five years. According to Randy Chilton, "It continues to be a real steady business for us." He cautions, "It is a whole different business. You need one person devoted to this area." Steve Cross manages retail sales at Chilton Vending.

Why all the interest? "People want to create an environment where their kids can stay home," commented Chilton. Pool tables are the most popular items, accounting for 60 percent of sales, but that purchase often leads to others.

"When they come in for a pool table they start looking at bar stools, pinballs, and other equipment and it starts steamrolling," explains Chilton. "They find additional products that all fit, and that's really the idea behind the showroom."

Retail sales are seasonal to a degree, heavy towards Christmas, but Chilton adds, "We do quite a bit of volume the first three-fourths of the year as well."

Chilton offers this advice: "As with any new venture, do your homework. Visit other sites and talk to others involved in this market. The biggest advantage for our company is that we can run two businesses out of one facility and share a lot of overhead, which is helpful. We're continually looking at ways to expand that business, perhaps with additional locations."

Chilton Vending received Brunswick's national Most Improved Dealer Award for 1995.

GAMES PEOPLE PLAY

Charles Rowland believes in a full-blown showroom and proper monitor-

Pool anyone? You can see the Chilton Billiards sign and creative outdoor lights from afar in Wichita, Kan.

Open Now CHILTON BILLIARDS

Chilton Vending & Billiards features pool tables, jukeboxes, pinballs, deluxe card tables, and other items in the showroom.

ing. "I've got a guy who does work in the shop and he and I partner on the showroom sales," he says of his Richmond, Va., company facility.

His philosophy is simple: "You've got to devote the time to have a whole showroom and have someone to talk intelligently about the machines and the price. You cannot sell games out of your warehouse."

C & N SALES

The N. Mankato, Minn., company was always in retail sales in a limited way with pool and dart supplies, but when it moved to a new building eight years ago 2,500 square feet were devoted to home recreation furniture.

Now retail sales have moved out of C & N's buildings, except for the office in Marshall, and into major retail malls with three locations called Fun n' Games. Items on display include pool tables and related accessories plus nostalgic decorative items with images of such icons as James Dean, Elvis, and Marilyn Monroe, along with specialized games like chess, backgammon, cribbage, unique 3-D puzzles, and brain games.

Being in a mall is a lot different than being in your own building, explains Tami Norberg-Paulsen of C & N. "You have to rely on additional items to justify the mall rent. We have become a specialty retailer with items from low price points to very expensive. You cannot carry the mass merchant types of games."

While C & N's managers have been with the company since the division first opened, there is more employee turnover in the sales force in a mall environment. "Retail is a difficult business," says Norberg-Paulsen. "A lot of training is required for employees to increase their product knowledge.

"With retail you also have to become a good manager of inventory levels and be able to predict customer preferences in advance because purchases have to be made months ahead."

She cautions, "Just putting some nice home pool tables in your warehouse and putting an ad in the newspaper is not going to make it a successful business. It's price competitive. You have to become an expert merchandiser and really gear your showroom and store environment to the consumer, the ultimate customer. Most of them are going in to purchase a large ticket item and they expect a clean, upscale, trendy-type environment and sales people with product knowledge."

In addition, says Norberg-Paulsen, it becomes important to deal with the manufacturers that have consistent product and good warranties.

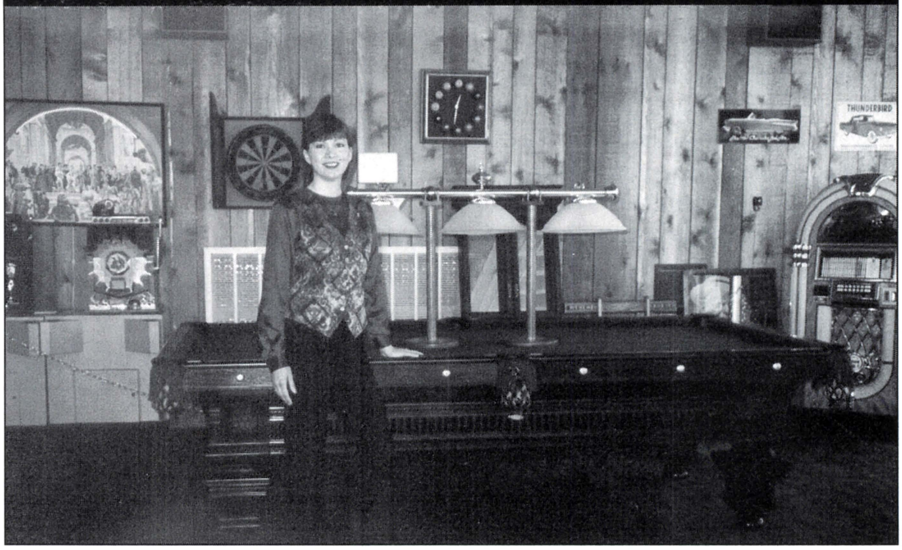
General recommendations: Find your specialty niche, offer a high quality product at a fair perceived value, and be able to sell against the mass merchants.

Another suggestion: Taking the showroom out of the picture, any street operator running leagues can supply pool and dart accessories to their league locations by offering wholesale packages that can be sold retail to players. Packages can include everything from dart flights to cue cases, along with a display cabinet. Items are restocked monthly by route personnel. This is an extra service for your locations, plus it's a nice sideline for them and reinforces the value of having leagues in that location.

A sign of the times: When C & N first started out in the home table market the most popular color of billiard cloth for a home table was the standard green. Now only a few tables are sold annually with green cloth. Decorators actually come in with customers.

Home owners are investing a lot in family rooms, adding big screen TVs, deluxe card tables, and pool tables with all the accessories. Supplying these products can open new doors of opportunity when planned and managed properly. ▲

Mary Ann Brauninger of AMA Distributors next to her favorite table, The Jewel, an authentic reproduction of an 1894 Brunswick model. Notice the antique slot machines, home dart board, clock, wall decorations, and jukebox.



"You have to become an expert merchandiser and gear your showroom and store environment to the consumer."

Converted candy cranes spell profit for Three Point Redemption

Operators looking to make big profits from cranes should think small!

That's the message Tom Oxtoby, president of Springfield, Ill.,-based Three Point Redemption, is preaching based on his own recent experience running larger plush items in converted candy cranes.

The experiment was born out of Oxtoby's frustration with waning candy crane revenues as well as his conviction that a new concept was needed to revive his route. After several years of attending trade shows and contacting various manufacturers in search of the solution, he set out to create his own unique plush mix consisting of high-quality, collectible key chains and mini-plush. The results, according to Oxtoby, were astounding.

"In the last three months the individual crane income went from an average of $60 a week to $300 a week, week after week," he declared. "I wish I had done this conversion two years ago."

Three Point is currently in the process of converting all of the company's Smart candy cranes over to 50 cents a vend and configuring them as skill cranes as opposed to winner-every-time devices. The company has also placed the signature plush mix in Rainbow's new 30-inch skill crane with larger capacity and a bill acceptor.

"What is great is that we can place these cranes next to our jumbo cranes and see a play increase in both," Oxtoby added. "It doesn't rob Peter to pay Paul. And with the small cranes we can cater to a whole market area that will not take the big cranes because of space. The cranes are so small they just can't say no."

A CHALLENGING START

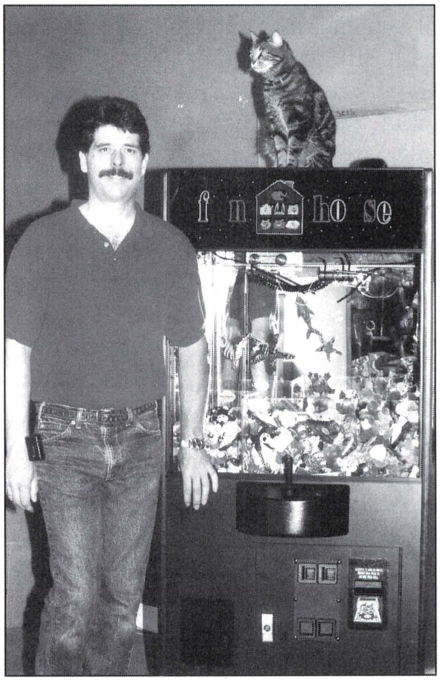
Three-Point Redemption, which operates the converted cranes as well 45 *Hoop It Ups*, is run by Oxtoby and his partner Judy Goby. Oxtoby got his start in the coin-op industry as a locator for a large Midwestern operator and is also president of Tri-Vend Inc., a six year old amusement business with high-end videos and close to 50 crane games in 300 locations including taverns, bowling alleys, truck stops, and even laundromats.

Tri-Vend started six years ago at the beginning of the spiral gumball machine craze, explained Oxtoby, who said the company then moved on to Merit *Megatouch* games and later high-end video simulators such as *Cruis'n USA* driving games. Tri-Vend is run by Oxtoby and his partner Paul Thompson.

"We got into the business doing what other people didn't want to handle," recalled Oxtoby, whose company doesn't operate any pool, darts, jukeboxes, or other traditional route staples. "We kind of moved into *Cruis'ns* and fighting games and we started with Incredible Technologies' golf and bowling games before anybody else."

This is part and parcel of the company's philosophy which is basically to always stay on the cutting edge of new equipment available. Tri-Vend will often resell or trade in its video product after little more than a year, hoping to avoid a stockpile of worthless old games in the warehouse or on location. "We don't always have the whole location so we have to be a little bit better," Oxtoby said.

Three Point Redemption, which spun off from Tri-Vend a year ago, is now offering Tom's Unique Mix for sale to other vendors who want to convert their candy cranes and reap the benefits. While the mix is always changing, it is pre-packaged by the gross and items cost between 50 cents and $1.85, making them much higher quality than the traditional slum merchandise found in winner-every-time candy cranes.



Tom Oxtoby of Three Point Redemption with a candy crane converted to vend small plush items.

Items in the mix include: sports shoes; Looney Tunes, NBA, and other licensed plush; sand critters; small leather goods (which Oxtoby says are particularly popular); bean bag plush, NASCAR collectibles; and Harley-Davidson items. "We are the only ones doing it but I am sure that others will pick up on it," concluded Oxtoby.

For more information on the plush mix, contact Oxtoby or Goby, Three Point Redemption, 329 South New St., Springfield, IL 62704; (217)522-6882; fax (217)522-6893. ▲

Users' Reports

"We really liked our first Token Tech, which is why we ordered our second. I'm calling now to order our third."

"The Token Tech eliminates the need to spend hours making up rolls of 20 and 40 Tokens. We are saving enough labor cost to more than pay for it in less than two months."

"The best investment since we bought our fax machine. I can't ever imagine doing business without either one."

"We have good employees . . . The Token Tech removes the temptation for them to become "silent partners" by skimming the till."

"It's great! You should have come out with it 10 years ago."

"After using our Token Tech for Quarters, we are switching over to Tokens. Thanks to the dispenser, we got acquainted with your Token Systems."

"The Token Tech eliminates long lines at our cashier's cage. Our customers like it, too!"

"Our Batting Cage Tokens are valued at $1 each. Anyone with a high-value Token should be using a Token Tech."

"We use a larger size Token for our Carwash. All Tokens are sold through the Token Tech. It's accurate, and much faster, and it keeps our people honest."

"The first two Token Techs are excellent. We are sending our purchase order for six additional units."

"It's working just perfect. We love it!"

"For a $3 Cigarette Token, it's the only way to do business."

"We were using a system which had the "illusion of control" . . . The first shift manager counted all our Tokens. The third shift manager emptied all the cashboxes, and did a day-end count."

"The Token Tech has simplified our whole operation, and we know exactly where we stand every hour."

"We bought a similar item, made in Europe. It cost a lot more, but it never worked right, so we sent it back. Your Token Tech is far superior."

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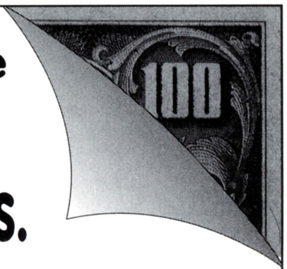

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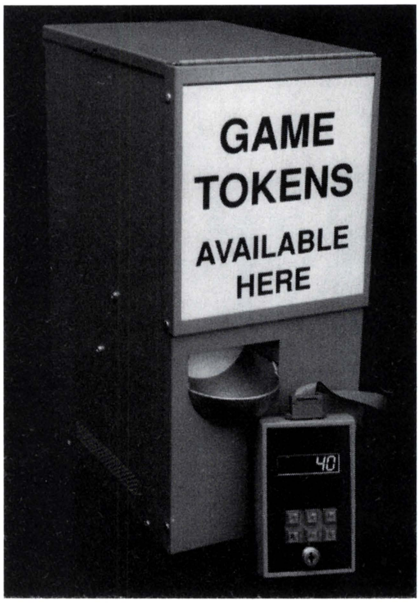
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.882	9,000	1.000	7,500
.900	9,000	1.125	6,000

Coin	Capacity	Coin	Capacity
US Quarter	7,000	Brazilian 20 Cruzados	4,500
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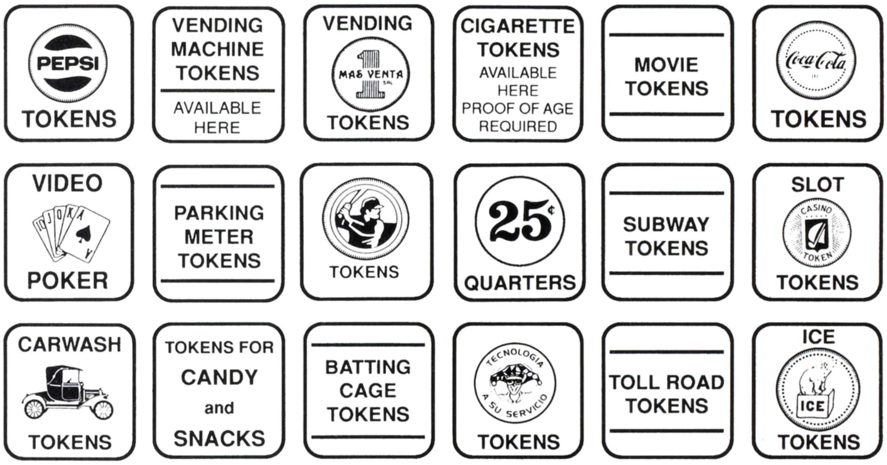
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BONNIE **THEARD**

The Entertainer (West Coast Mfg.)

Even the late Arthur Murray would be proud of the moves that vended products make in the new wave of bulk vending machines. These units are anything but the usual "coin in, product out" scenario. Designers combined a series of ramps and complex pathways for the items to traverse on the way to their final destination: a customer's waiting hand.

A near explosion of these machines has hit the market lately; expect to see an abundance at the fall trade shows.

Here's a closer look at most of the available models:

Products literally perform tricks after customers plunk their coin into the *Wacky Fun Factory* machine by the company of the same name. Interchangeable, customized sound chips play jingles or other messages and round out the experience.

Inspiration for the *Wacky Fun Factory* came from company founder Mark Lee, who made his mark in the industry with the wildly popular *The Wizard* spiral gumball machine introduced in 1991. His engineering background held him in good stead when it came to putting a new face on bulk vending.

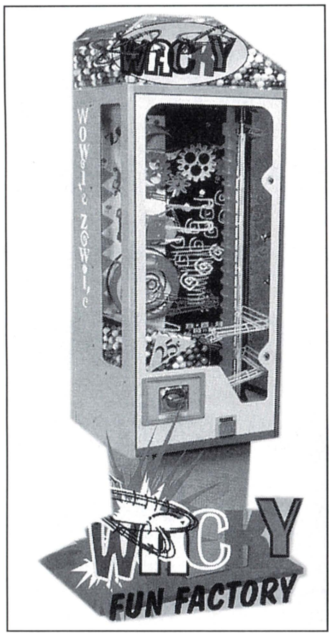
Says Lee, "*The Wizard* led to the revelation that we could integrate entertainment with bulk vending. We knew we could make a more complex machine, but we wanted to find a balance with a model that has enough tricks to draw attention yet is not so high-tech it's too complicated for maintenance."

The result is a machine suitable for a typical operator, a machine that stands up under constant use and brings a good return on investment. Lee reports that some locations want his machine for their store or restaurant as a tourist attraction, which he says "is unusual for any kind of vending machine."

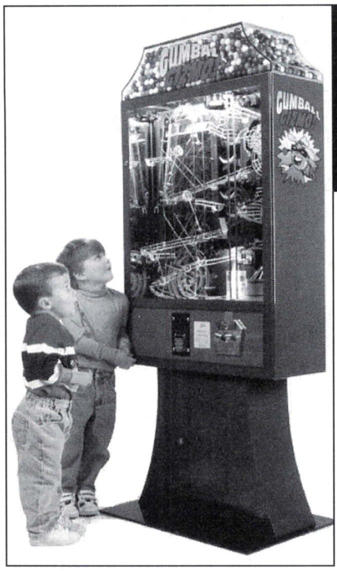
Among the *Wacky Fun Factory* machine features are big Lexan panels for clear viewing, a Beaver coin mech, and a one-year warranty. Suggested locations include theme parks, water parks, FECs, restaurants, and retail stores, although you can use your imagination for additional creative spots.

Wacky Fun Factory machine dimensions are 72" high x 18" deep x 26.75" wide. It accepts foreign coins and is capable of multiple vends. A smaller model is now available to suit an even wider range of locations.

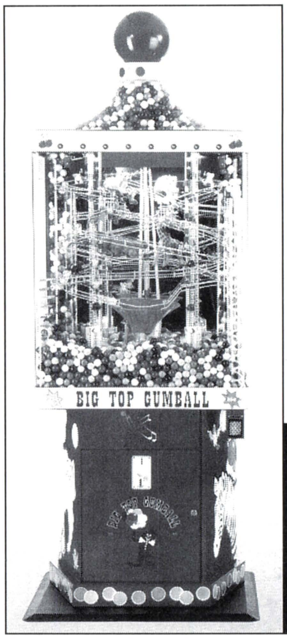
Over at West Coast Mfg. Chris Marek informs that its kinetic machine, *The Entertainer*, "puts on a 40-second



***Wacky Fun Factory* (Wacky Fun Factory)**



***Gumball Gizmo!* (Gizmo Distributing)**



***Big Top Gumball* (Big Top USA)**

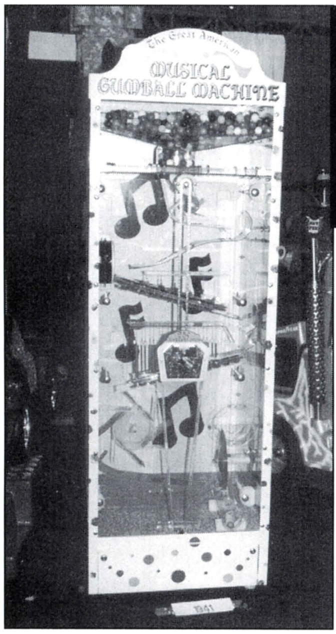
show that kids love. It's a very efficient machine that holds 2,000 850-count gumballs or jawbreakers on opposite sides."

West Coast distributes the dual product/dual coin mech machine in both the domestic and international markets. Gumballs and jawbreakers in *The Entertainer* literally take a roller coaster ride. The unit's cabinet is red; it stands 72 inches high and 30 inches wide.

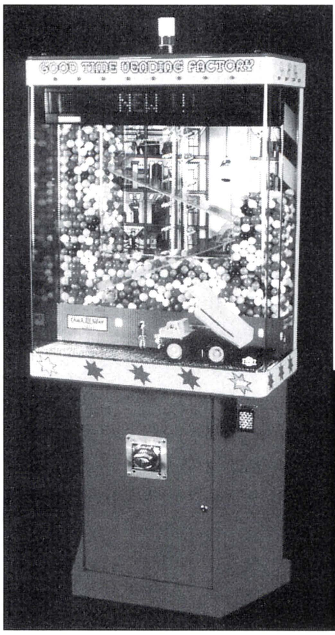
Gumbotron is a machine that "takes vending to the next level" says Jim Chapman of J.P. Distributing, which distributes it in the United States. "These machines are very popular," says Chapman. "They always do well in malls, but we've seen increases in grocery store revenues and that of other locations where you ordinarily see only traditional looking machines. *Gumbotron* has mass appeal—children, teens, adults, and grandparents."

Gumbotron developers are just about ready to introduce the *Gravitron*, an economical unit that is well suited to medium and smaller size restaurants, laundromats, delis, ice cream stores, sandwich shops, and video stores.

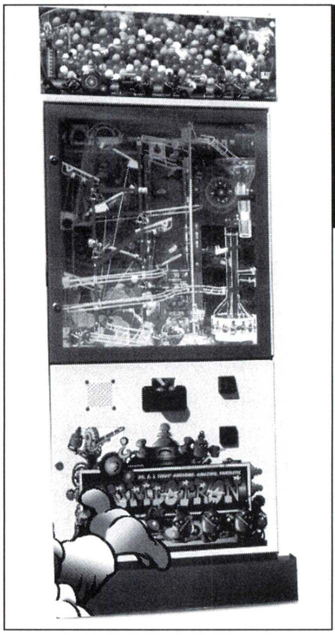
"We've awakened the marketplace," contends Chapman, who explains that *Gumbotron* units can be found in all types of locations, from the Luxor Hotel in Las Vegas to Golf 'N Games in Florida. Besides gumballs and jawbreakers, the machine accommodates secret center candies for areas that prefer to stay away from gum. *Gumbotron* measures 72.9" high x 30.4" wide x 16" deep.



***Musical Gumball Machine* (Kiddie Rides USA)**



***Good Time Vending Factory* (Quick Silver Development)**



***Gumbotron* (J.P. Distributing/ Fabtek/ Canadian Coin)**

Steve Ward of Fabtek, the international distributor for *Gumbotron*, adds, "The machine is popular in larger FECs overseas because it's such an entertainment piece."

Canadian Coin Machine Distributing, *Gumbotron*'s Canadian distributor, sees a growing interest in this new-age vending machine. General manager Jim Niblock of Canadian Coin says, "Test results have been very good; we've sold quite a few. The idea of entertainment with vending started with the spiral machines and went from there. The kinetic machines are more exotic, and they provide an opportunity to get a higher vend price. In Canada you get three gumballs for $1, and that's a first for the bulk vendors."

Game researchers and designers have been busy at Quick Silver Development, a company known for redemption equipment. Greg Malavazos of Quick Silver tells us that the company had been looking at bulk vending for a while. "We could see the redemption market was going down and we shifted gears." The company is now focusing on bulk vending, electronic boards, and gaming products.

Malavazos exhibited the *Good Time Vending Factory* machine at coin-op's ASI spring show but also at other trade events such as the National Bulk Vending Show, Bowling Proprietors Show, and Pizza Show, which cover additional ideal locations for the machine.

"We have a two to three week backlog of orders," he says. The machines are currently in chain stores such as Toys R Us and Wal-Mart, as well as theme parks, shopping malls, and groceries.

"Our machine provides an entertaining show you can relate to," says Malavazos, "It's unique in that it can be an advertising venue with its eight color dot-matrix display."

Good Time Vending Factory follows a loading dock theme and features a truck that moves across the playfield catching the product, backing up, and dispensing it to the customer. It can accommodate nuts, jelly beans, capsules, and irregular-shaped small products other than gumballs.

Single product and multi-product models are available. Dimensions for both are 70" high x 32" wide x 26.5" deep.

A more fun way of enjoying a gumball was behind Gizmo Distributing's *Gumball Gizmo!* developed by the Utah design firm of Bixworks Co. and manufactured and marketed by Gizmo.

The machine brings out the little kid in everyone, says co-designer Dale Emery on the Bixworks Web site. The gumball rolls down spirals and chutes and even falls into a whirlpool funnel before encountering more twists and ramps for a full 45 seconds. A sound system plays trapdoor and rotator sounds, among others. Dimensions are 68" high x 30" wide x 12" deep.

Emery and Van Peery conceived *Gumball Gizmo!* in 1991 and debuted the prototype in September 1993 at the Spaghetti Factory on the second level of Trolley Square in Salt Lake City, where a *Gumball Gizmo!* continues to entertain customers today. Before that, Emery and Peery crafted a coin-driven mechanical machine called the *Kineticon* that did not vend a product but proved valuable for the subsequent *Gumball Gizmo!*

Mike Patch of Gizmo Distributing feels strongly about the machine's first-class look. "It has opened a lot of doors for us," says Patch. Successful locations include shopping malls, airports, museums, restaurants, theme parks, and other high-traffic regional destination stops. A new *Gizmo Jr.* machine is planned for August which should open up even more locations.

In addition, Kiddie Rides USA has the *Musical Gumball Machine*, a non-electric gravity/kinetic-powered machine that comes with battery-powered sound, $1,000 coin capacity, Northwestern coin mech, and music-themed interior. It holds four cases of 850-count gumballs.

> ***"The idea of entertainment with vending started with the spiral machines and went from there."***

Big Top Gumball is another kinetic-style machine from Big Top USA. It is constructed of 12-gauge steel with Lexan windows. The single vend allows 20 seconds for the gumball to move through the maze.

Note: Machine prices can range from $1,200 to $5,000. They can be placed almost anywhere, appeal to every age and both genders, and never go out of style.

For more information on kinetic-style vending machines, contact the following companies:

- **Big Top Gumball (617)662-4111**
- **Canadian Coin Machine (604)420-4008**
- **Fabtek (206)881-0900**
- **Gizmo Distributing (800)872-1600**
- **J.P. Distributing (888)281-7710**
- **Kiddie Rides USA (303)399-7191**
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Acclaim Coin-Op Entertainment
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Fax:(415)528-2185
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VP Mktg.: Sam Goldberg
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VP Eng: John Pasierb
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TECHNOLOGY AND PLAYER BASE SPUR growth OF TRADITIONAL ROUTE MACHINES

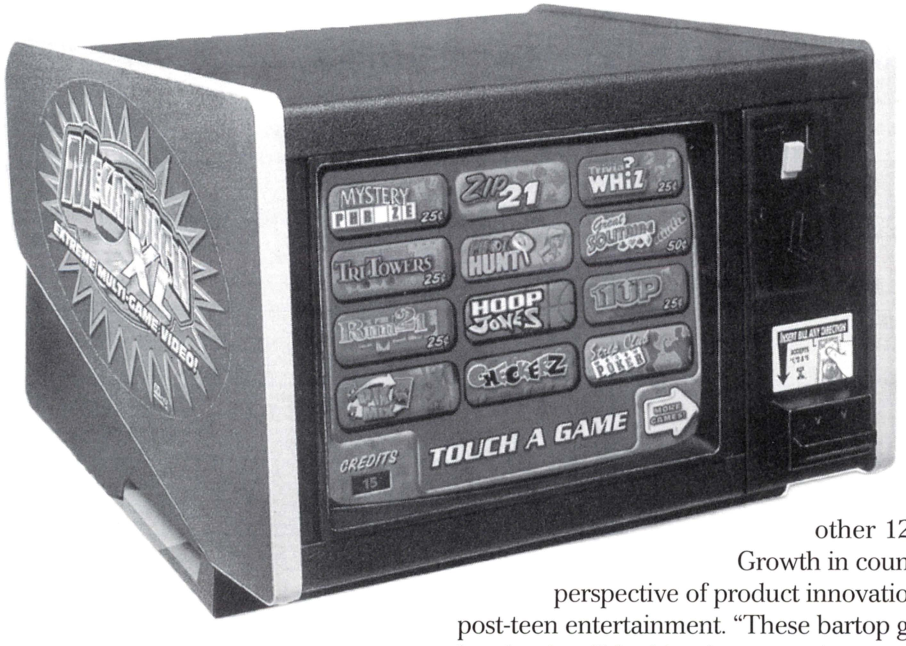
STEVE WHITE

WHAT EXPLAINS THE RAPID GROWTH IN SALES OF COUNTERTOP UNITS OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS, NOT TO MENTION THE ENTRANCE OF A MAJOR COIN-OP PLAYER LIKE MIDWAY GAMES INTO THE MARKETPLACE?

"Countertops never died and with the introduction of the touch screen and the CD-ROM they are hot as a pistol," answers countertop veteran Mort Ansky of JVL and formerly of U.S. Games. "You are going to see a whole new revolution of software for countertops and everybody is going to benefit because of the price."

That's a tall order to fill, but others in the industry say it is not an unreasonable goal. In fact, a number of industry watchers attribute recent enthusiasm over countertops to the unprecedented success of Merit Industries' *Megatouch* series and its early domination of the countertop market. At least one of the major Japanese video manufacturers even looked at producing countertops before deciding against the move.

"The market has grown by 50 percent over the last six months and is at its zenith," noted Jim Ragonese, director of sales for touch screen manufacturer MicroTouch. "But I believe it has legs and can maintain for another 12 to 18 months."



The success of Merit's *Megatouch* series has in part fueled enthusiasm over countertops.

Growth in countertops can be explained both from the perspective of product innovations and the marketplace demand for post-teen entertainment. "These bartop games tend to address the over 21 market that is still looking for entertainment value," explained Ragonese. "There was a void in the market."

Joe Dillon, vice president of sales for Williams Bally/Midway, said the appeal of its affiliate Midway Games' *Touchmaster* as well as other countertops is complemented by the economics of operating the machines. "Low price combines with strong and consistent collections to provide an excellent return on investment," he explained. "Countertop games also need less service and are easy to update."

Technological innovations include the introduction of touch screens and CD-ROM drives, as well as the potential for networking both within a location and ultimately from location to location.

Don Teske, general manager of the Fun Company which makes cabinets for both countertop and standup route machines, says the networked machine of the future will be able to coexist with the traditional countertop bar machines.

"I think there will be room for both," he said. "The Internet games will probably do better in the long run. It's worth it to spend the extra money for the phone line and everything else you need."

PRODUCT INNOVATION

One of the things the touch screen has allowed, according to Ragonese, is the development of new and creative games, including concentration and "breaking bricks"-type attractions. "You couldn't do that with the old button games," he said.

"Countertops never died and with the introduction of the touch screen and the CD-ROM they are hot as a pistol."

With no apparent hit application or type of game for countertop games like you see in the rest of video games, this helps foster a diversity of entertainment product for operators.

Computer networking, another way of capitalizing on technology, is the cornerstone of at least one company's new approach to the countertop marketplace. In fact, PlayNet Technologies chose the countertop machine as the model to spearhead a whole line of Internet-based games and retail kiosk machines. Midway has also announced plans to introduce *Touchmaster* units that are compatible with AMOA's National Amusement Network Inc., although at press time the units were still being tweaked.

"It was the best way to introduce this system," said PlayNet's vice president of promotions Jon Monday. "There's a paradigm you can work with already in place. The thing that distinguishes our system is the ability to do transactions online, and the implications of that are vast."

While PlayNet has based its future on those implications, not everyone is convinced that computer networking will drive the short-term future of the countertop business. Both Ragonese and Ansky said they were skeptical of the present potential for linking location to location.

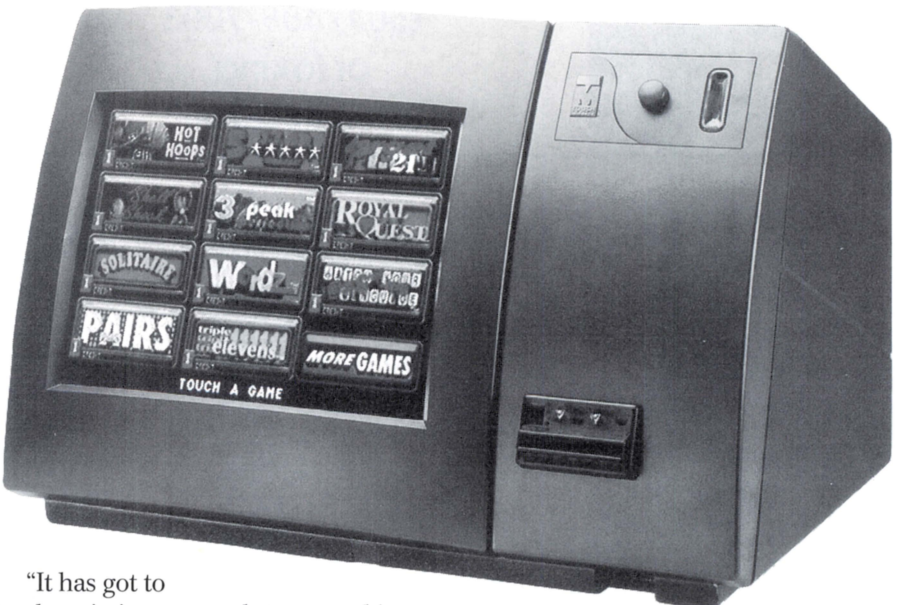
"It has got to be done in incremental stages and in a way that is not intimidating to operators," said Ansky.

Eschewing the information superhighway for more mainstream, or maybe Main Street, entertainment is redemption game manufacturer Lazer-Tron, which has taken aim at the same market targeted by countertops and with a similarly innovative attraction. The company's *Prize Zone* unit features a variety of skill games for street locations with a twist—the ability to acquire prize credits that can be redeemed for customized goods and services programmed into the machine and printed on a coupon at the conclusion of play. Up to 15 different prizes can be used, and payout percentages are completely adjustable.

"It's a full redemption center in a single game so locations can merchandise whatever they want," explained Matt Kelly of Lazer-Tron. "It takes the countertop and expands on that idea. Obviously the trends are the tournament-style games (for the standard countertop market), but the future for us is going to be different."

MARKET POTENTIAL

What, in fact, the future does hold for the continued growth of countertop games is a matter up for debate.



Midway Games introduced its *Touchmaster* countertop two years ago.

While some members of the industry argue that the market has reached a healthy plateau, others contend there is more than enough room for continued growth in both traditional and non-traditional locations.

"We are just starting to realize the size of the countertop market," said Dillon. "If you look at the number of jukeboxes in the United States—about 250,000—and realize that every jukebox location is a potential location for one and sometimes two countertop games you could easily make the argument that the United States market alone could handle almost half a million countertops. We are nowhere near the saturation point."

"For years most companies didn't understand countertops," added Ansky. "They just catered to game rooms. But countertops have been here the last few years. I don't see it slowing down in any way. They have become a staple of the business."

> **"We are just starting to realize the size of the countertop market."**

While Ragonese and Teske agree that countertops have demonstrated unusual strength in what many say is an otherwise soft market, they argue that the growth will stabilize, evolving into a steady but less volatile market force.

"I don't think it's saturated but it's awfully close," Teske said. "There may be a shakeout, but the bigger players will be more innovative and survive."

However, the question remains whether those innovations will open up new types of locations for countertops, which have achieved their primary success in the tavern market.

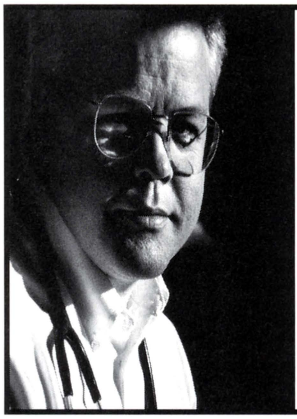
"With Internet games and touch screens, you are looking at coffee houses and everything else," said Teske. "Now it is not so much a game as a communication system."

According to Monday, that is one of the tenets of PlayNet's philosophy. The company's PlayNet Web unit will be targeted at hotels, airports, and any "leisure place where people pause."

But this idea is not universal. Dillon said Midway has found its main growth market remains in street locations, especially taverns, and Ragonese said research conducted by MicroTouch tends to confirm that notion. "We have found in talking to our customers that the primary market is the bar drinking establishment," he said.

Despite these differences of opinion, there is a general consensus that countertop units have benefited all levels of the industry with impressive return on investment, low service costs, and the ability to upgrade easily at little or no cost.

"Countertops have revitalized the video category in our traditional street locations," concluded former AMOA president Tammy Norberg-Paulsen of C & N Sales in Mankato, Minn. ▲



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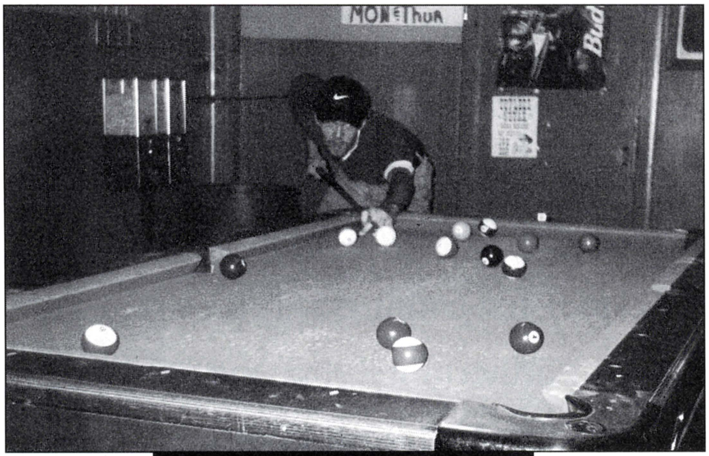

Nolte Lincks III

If you're a street operator, you've weighed the advantages of running leagues. Distributors will often help in getting you started and, of course, the manufacturers will give you all the information at their disposal so you'll do it right. But after all is said and done, the one that ultimately benefits from your efforts is the player. If you don't have players, you simply don't have a league. We visited J&K Tavern in New Orleans and talked with some league players to find out just what they like, and don't like, about making the commitment of joining a league.

Nolte Lincks III
"Pool Sharks"
Age 24
Deckhand

Nolte began playing pool 14 years ago and joined his first league in 1990. He decided to join a league because many of his friends had joined and all they did was talk about how much fun they were having. Finally, he joined, bringing with him his girlfriend, mother, sister, brother-in-law, step-dad, and plenty of friends.

He enjoyed the pool league so much that he also joined a 9-Ball league and a bowling league. He said that the best thing about belonging to a league program is "getting a large group of people together who all like the same thing–shooting pool!" He also likes the competition between all of the players and ranking the top 20 players at the end of the season.

We asked him what the worst thing was about belonging to a league program. He said, "The worst thing would be the arguing and fighting among the different teams and team members. Also, I don't like the "23 rule" because it's not good for the higher skilled level player because it limits a team on who can play that night. Only five people of the eight on the team can play on any given night. The handicap of the five players may not exceed 23 and a player is ranked from a two to a seven (seven being the better skilled player). I believe the rule should be 25 instead of 23."

Nolte says that he plays pool at least two nights a week when he's not playing in a league. "I play more often now because I have to keep in practice," he noted.

John Dugas Jr.
"Pool Sharks"
Age 24
Bar manager/owner

John, called J.J., grew up exposed to the game of pool. His dad owned a bar, and about 11 years ago J.J. began playing pool. He joined his first league in 1991. When he began managing his dad's tavern, he made pool leagues one of his priorities. He also added dart leagues when his customers showed an interest. J.J. said he decided to join a league because of his love of the game, and he especially enjoys the competitiveness. His brother also participates in the league.

J.J. said that the best thing for him in belonging to a league program is being part of a team and being able to contribute. J.J. said the worst thing is when the team has to play away! He plays pool almost every day when not playing on a league.

Michael Baklad
"Shooters"
Age 41
Carpenter

Michael has been playing pool for 20 years and joined his first league shortly after he started playing. He plays pool at least two times a week, practicing for league night. He said he decided to join a league to get out of the house.

While no one in his family has joined him on the league, he says one of the best things about being on a team is getting out and meeting new people. One thing that he doesn't like is when fights break out during league play.

Neil Dugas
"J&K"
Age 20
Bartender

Neil took up pool some 15 years ago and hasn't stopped playing since. He joined his first league two years ago. He plays about three days a week when not playing on the team. He said he joined the pool league because he wanted to learn as much as he could about the game.

Mindy Mitchell

He enjoys getting out and meeting new people and playing on a team with not only his own friends, but his parents' friends as well. He has also joined a dart league, which he said he enjoys.

"One of the best things about being involved in a league," Neil said, "is you get to learn about the game of pool as a team, therefore it's easier to learn and you get to be a better player. Plus it's fun!" But Neil admits that he doesn't like the rules and handicaps.

David
"Shooters"
Age 37
Firefighter

David, who didn't want to give us his last name, said he began playing pool 23 years ago at the age of 14. He joined his first league in 1989 and has been playing on a team ever since. He plays once or twice a week other than league nights. He said he joined a league because most of his friends had already joined and they convinced him to give it a try.

One of the best things for David is that his wife is on the team, too. "At first, I'd leave my wife at home and play on the league by myself. Now she plays and is also the designated driver at the end of the night since she doesn't drink," he explained.

The worst thing for David about playing on a league is that too many players drink too much and he hates playing last.

Mindy Mitchell
"Pool Sharks"
Age 21
College Student

Mindy began playing pool six years ago when her parents got a pool table for their home. She said she enjoyed playing and her boyfriend soon talked her into joining a league. "I decided to join the league with my boyfriend because it was something to do," she explained. "But the more I played the more I really enjoyed it. I then joined another league for women, so I'm playing two nights a week."

Mindy told us that she also plays for fun at least one night a week. She has also joined a bowling league for the same reasons, the friends and the competition. The worst thing about being in a league is having to stay up late on work nights. "When you have to be at work for 7:00 a.m., it's hard to stay up late." ▲

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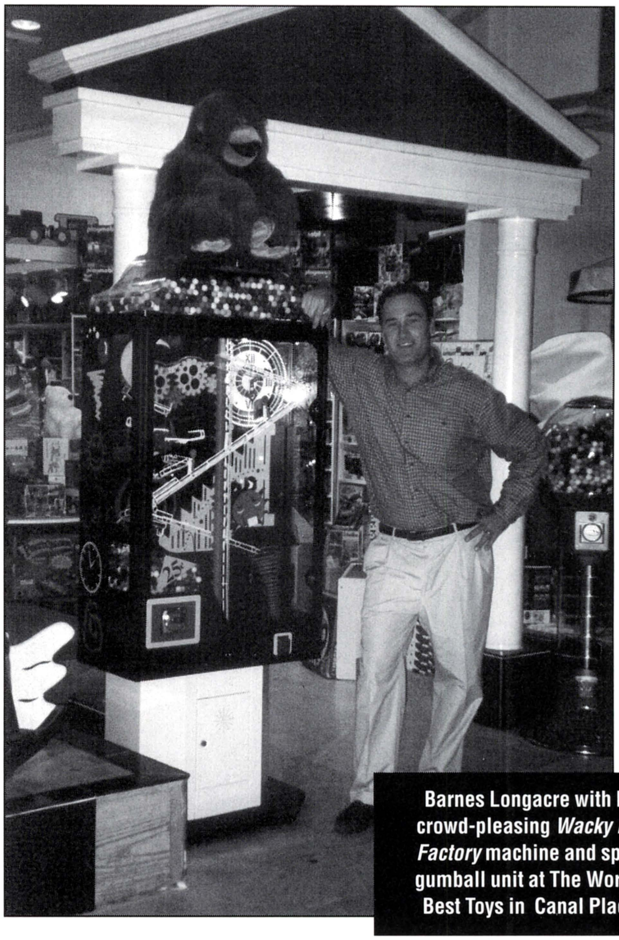
TAKING IT TO THE STREET

BULK VENDING

Tumble, Twist & Turn:

KINETIC MACHINES IMPACT LOCATIONS



Barnes Longacre with his crowd-pleasing *Wacky Fun Factory* machine and spiral gumball unit at The World's Best Toys in Canal Place.

Who can best tell the tale of kinetic-style vending units? Operators and locations relate their field experience.

"A discerning public demands a little something extra, even for a single vended piece of gum," comments **Mike Patch** of Gizmo Distributing in Beloit, Wis., manufacturer, distributor, and operator of the kinetic-style *Gumball Gizmo!* vending machine.

Patch is a large amusement street operator with 250 locations in two states. The company never did any bulk vending until it started making *Gumball Gizmo!* in partnership with Bixworks Co. of Utah.

"The neat thing about the machine is that it has opened doors that were previously closed to operators," says Patch. "Some of the smaller malls would have always let operators and bulk vendors in. But some of the upscale malls were very close-minded to any type of coin-op. Now, because of the uniqueness of this machine, it's a different story."

Gizmo Distributing has placed 100 *Gumball Gizmo!* machines in major mall locations and other high-traffic spots such as the Dallas Ft. Worth Airport.

Now that Patch is into bulk vending he says, "It has been eye-opening for us. It involves tracking inventory but once you get into it you say, 'Gee, what a perfect union.'

"It's a natural for any company with route collectors, service technicians, and a solid grasp of the area. We've

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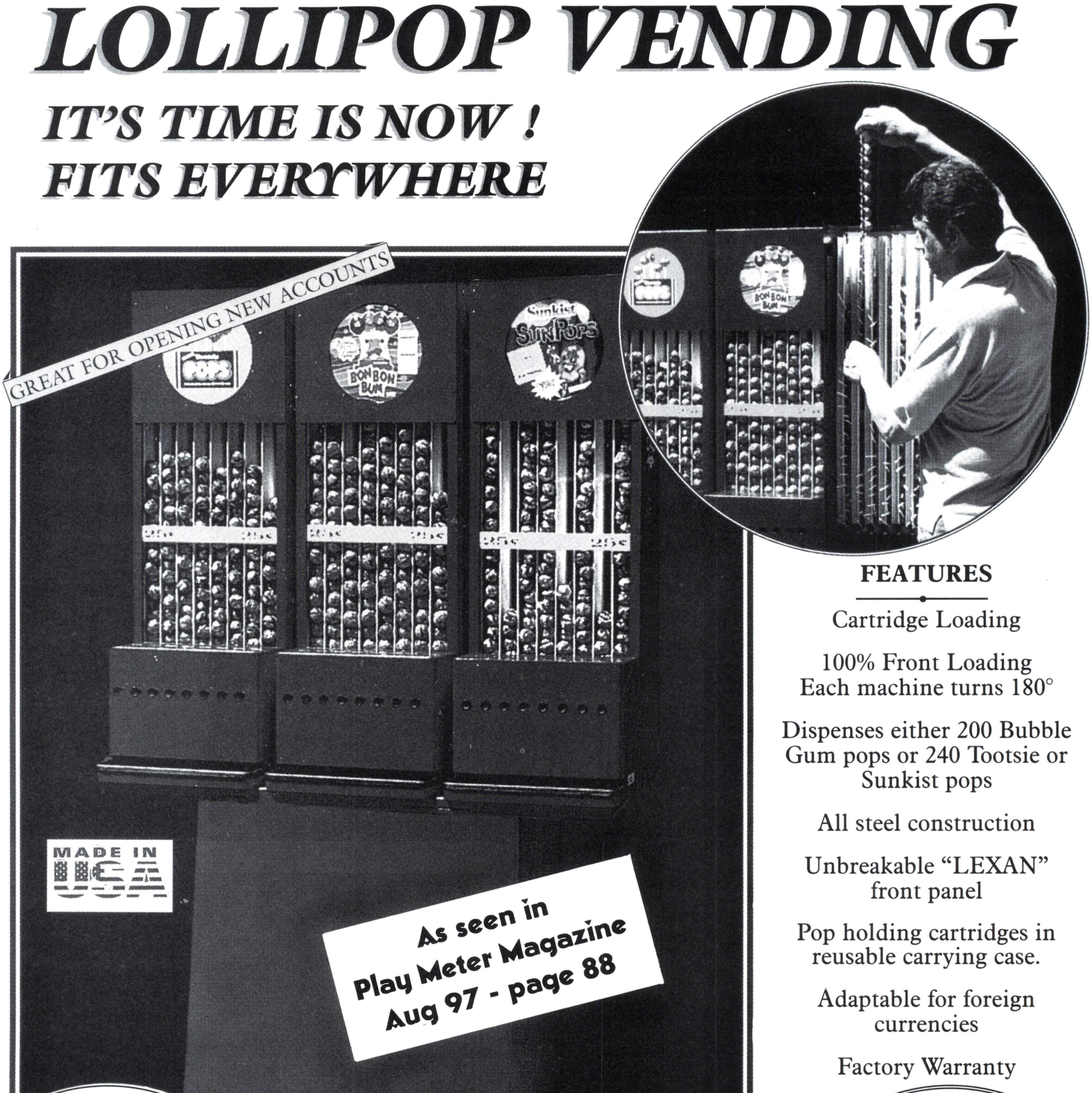
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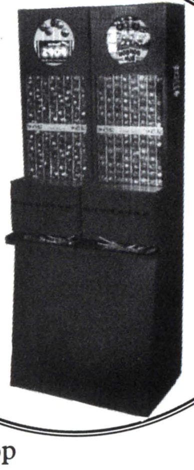

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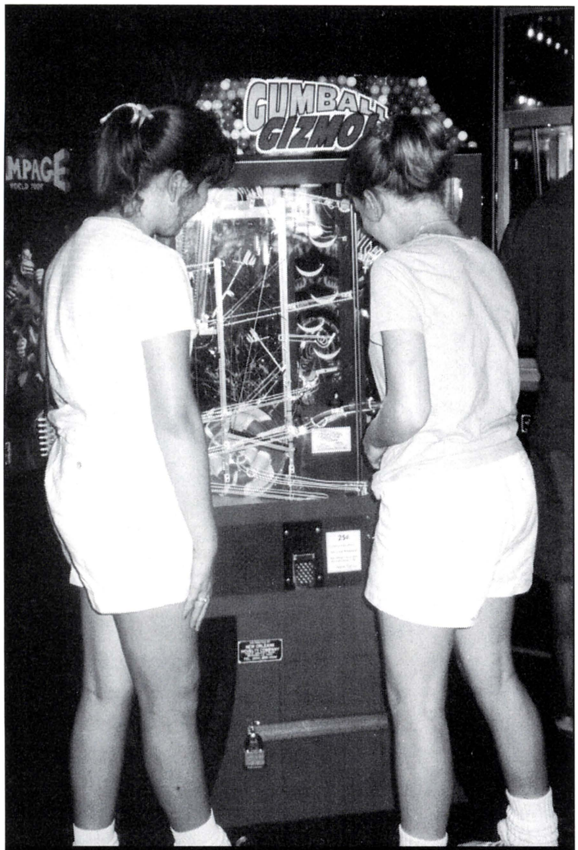

GUMBALL GIZMO!

Teen girls get a kick out of *Gumball Gizmo!* at New Orleans Novelty's Fun Spot game room at Lakeside Shopping Center.

evolved that whole bulk vending side of our route. Bulk vendors have known for years there is great ROI on bulk vending equipment. As we've seen video and pinball die a slow death, street operators need fresh areas to revitalize their routes."

This type of machine is a crowd-builder, says Patch. "A machine in front of the store literally builds a crowd and a number of those patrons filter through inside the door and become paying customers." He estimates there are probably over 1,800 kinetic-style machines on location in the United States. He sees plenty of room for growth in this segment of the market.

Barnes Longacre, owner of **The World's Best Toys** in New Orleans and Metairie, La., can attest to the traffic-building power of kinetic-style machines. He refers to his *Wacky Fun Factory* machine as "a huge attraction. Customers love it; they even take pictures in front of it."

Longacre saw a spiral gumball machine at ACME '95 and decided to place one in his main store in Canal Place, an upscale shopping complex in the heart of downtown. His clientele includes locals as well as an international crowd of visitors. The success of that machine led to the placement of another at the suburban store.

Then Longacre observed a *Wacky Fun Factory* at Lambert's Restaurant in Foley, Ala., and knew he had found another crowd-pleaser. He describes the unique vending machine as "toy-like and kid-like," a perfect match for his store. He agrees with its potential: "There are more locations out there than people realize."

Dale Moyer of **Fun Money Inc**. in Blue Springs, Mo., near Kansas City operates bulk vending machines from six or seven different manufacturers. He and his wife started small two years ago and now have 35 locations with 10 kinetic-style units and 25 small spiral machines.

"There are a lot of good places out there," says Moyer, adding, "Some of them really surprise you." Moyer puts in a small machine as a "spotter" in a location to get an idea of revenue, then decides what style of machine goes best there.

What got him interested in the beginning? Moyer noticed the level of gumballs going down in a mega machine at a mall location he visited frequently. Before long he was the first operator in Kansas City with a kinetic machine. He admits that a lot of people said, "I think you're crazy."

He expects to top out at 50 machines soon in this sideline business. His crazy notion has paid off in excellent ROI. "One of the biggest things we see now," says Moyer, "is that people call us, where we used to seek out locations. One grocery store chain is so happy with their machines because kids want to play them and they bring more adults in to shop. I think these (kinetic) machines are really going to boom in the near future."

Glen Jackson of **Ryan Vending** in Victoria, British Columbia, has been testing the *Gumbotron* kinetic-style vending machine on the BC Ferries' Spirit of Vancouver Island commuter vessel, where the company also operates other vending machines and dual game rooms.

Says Jackson, "The BC Ferries are interested in supplying some entertainment and product. *Gumbotron* is for families; it provides a little bit of fun. Because of its success with the younger crowd we'll probably be supplying kiddie rides on the vessels soon."

Jackson characterizes *Gumbotron* as a simple, trouble-free machine well suited to retail establishments and shopping malls, where they are most often found. The machine is not too big and can be mounted and secured against any wall, which is important for BC Ferries. Ryan Vending is a full-line vending operation with 1,700 vending units on location.

Mark Boasberg, business manager of **New Orleans Novelty Co.** in Metairie, La., has a *Gumball Gizmo!* currently at the company's Fun Spot game room at Lakeside Shopping Center, also in Metairie.

According to Boasberg, the purpose behind adding *Gumball Gizmo!* in a traditional game room is "to make the location attractive and keep customers in the location playing longer." He reports that "revenue is steady no matter where we put it." The machine was first at the new Fun Arcade in Covington, La. "It's fancy and impressive and we wanted that new location to be impressive," he says, adding, "It takes time to establish an arcade, even if it is in a great area."

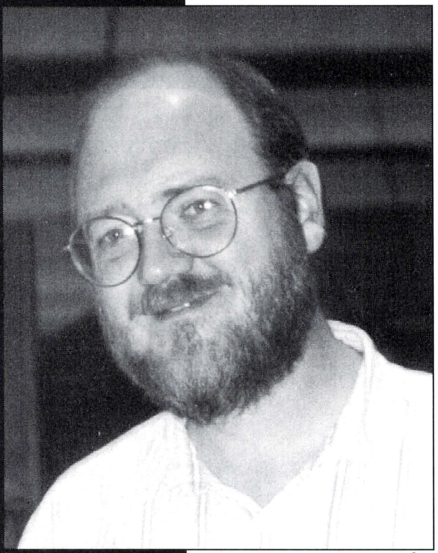
Boasberg says he has not had any trouble with gum showing up in unwanted places, and suggests putting this type of machine in a location where customers are respectful of the equipment. ▲

COINMAN **INTERVIEW**

Charles Rowland

Charles Rowland and his company Games People Play of Richmond, Va., represent the quintessential street operator striving to stay ahead of the odds through a combination of hard work, business acumen, and market savvy. In addition to his traditional street route, Rowland has branched out into redemption and been an innovator in the use of the dollar coin.

STEVE WHITE



How long have you been in the business and how did you get started?

I have owned my own company since 1979 which I started while I had a day job. But I go all the way back to when I was a kid, about 12 or 13. If a bingo got confiscated by the police they would take it to the dump and break it up and set it on fire. I would bring the pieces back and figure out how the relay banks and whatever was left of any old game worked. And one summer when I was about 14 or 15 I found three or four pinballs and a jukebox at the dump. I rode back home, it must have been five or six miles and I was going at light speed, got my mother in the big Galaxy 500, picked up a friend along the way and we hauled the three pinballs home. We ended up resurrecting them. I also had restored an old bowling machine I had gotten from the city that had been in a recreation center previously. After finding those pinballs, the next thing you know I went to see a distributor who was in Richmond 30 miles south who said, "You ought to try to find a summer job with an operator." So I got a job with an operator. I wasn't old enough to drive but I was making a dollar an hour riding around with the jukebox guy. He would change records and I would fix the pinball machines. I would also go out on big collections with guys on other accounts, reclutch bingos and all kinds of stuff in the shop. That's how I got my start. Then I went off to college and got a degree in electronics and worked with a number of computer companies. Every five years you would get laid off or sold to somebody else. In 1985 I when I got a layoff notice I said it's time to do my own thing. I have been doing it ever since.

What range of equipment do you operate in what types of locations?

We run the gamut from upscale bars to college accounts, and family entertainment centers, but it's mostly larger bars and accounts like that.

Are they all in Virginia?

Mostly in central Virginia. I've got one game room account that is farther away, but they are mostly centrally located.

What are some of the fundamental changes you have seen occur since you got started in the business?

I can only speak for what I have seen in central Virginia. You go to different parts of the state and the business may run completely different depending on the geographical area. But I know with the cost of equipment the way it is and the fact that we can't really run gray area equipment in ABC establishments any more, the amusement equipment has to pay for itself. There's no subsidy by gray area equipment. Where a location at one time could demand and get certain things, now we are more on equal footing. What you provide has to pay for itself. We've gone into some accounts with guaranteed minimums on some of the large simulators because the location wanted it and was willing to pay for it, but there is no way for them to demand it.

When you say that, you mean you receive a guaranteed minimum before the split?

If we have to make a $1,600 a month payment on the piece, we get $400 a week minimum, they get the second $400. Anything over $800 we will split 50/50. If there isn't $400 in the cashpan, they make up the difference.

Do you find the cost of amusement equipment to be the biggest challenge you face?

I don't think it's really the cost of equipment that is the problem; it's the return on investment. I don't think anybody would say *Daytona* was a bad investment. Even though there was a $17,000 price tag on the piece, it had excellent return on investment. There are pieces out there that manufacturers and distributors want similar prices on that you just can't get the same return. It wasn't that good. But because it was a large piece, they expected to get *Daytona* prices. If you look at the golf games and even *Police Trainer,* they are lower priced pieces but with good return on investment.

The issue there being that the return is not going to be linked to the price of the game, i.e. a game that cost less might earn more?

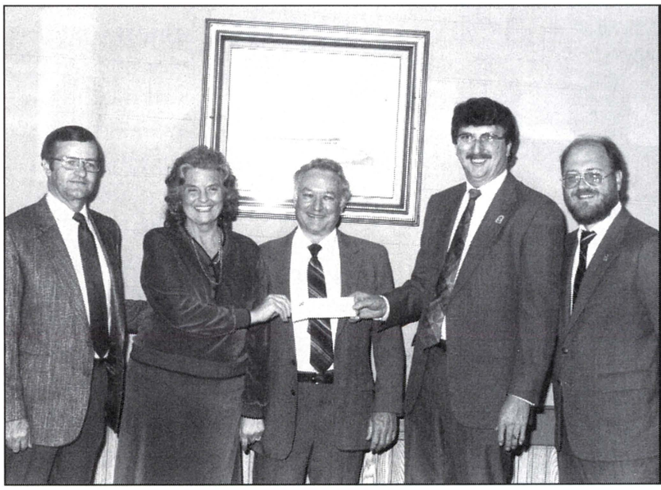
Correct or at least make as much. We've got situations where the *Daytonas* have been on location for a while and are still worth $10,000 at an auction. I've got *3-D Golfs* that are worth about $2,500 that make as much as the *Daytona* worth $10,000. If I could avoid upsetting the customer, I would be better off selling the *Daytona,* buying four golf games and making four times the money. A lot of times it's more than economics, it's politics as well.

That was the next thing I wanted to ask you. Has the business relationship between operators and locations changed since you have been in the industry?

I've seen it change from the standpoint that in the old days it was more competitive to get a location and keep a location (front money, 10 off the top, and free weeks). Maybe that worked back in the days when there were pool tables that would be there for years and pinball machines, and the stuff really didn't depreciate the way it does today. I just can't see that making much sense any more. You have to be able to make your payments. You have to be in a positive cash flow situation or you just cannot stay in business.

Does service play a more important role now or is it about the same?

To some degree, if you've got a competitor and a location complains that he's taking three days to fix something. We are usually there within an hour. We have had people comment that we have faster service. That is a selling point to some degree, but I think you must have the right equipment to begin with to make the money. The service is just icing on the cake.



Then Amusement Operators of Virginia executive director Charles Rowland, (far right), participates in a $10,000 donation to Earl (center) and Virginia Wells for a liver transplant. Also present at the 1989 event were AMOVs Rex Whitley (l) and John Newberry.

Are you involved in operating redemption and in what type of settings?

All of the redemption is in family entertainment centers. We had some machines in skating rinks previously, but primarily it's family entertainment centers.

Has it been successful for you?

I think it's one of those bread and butter segments of the industry right now. In family entertainment centers I think the video takes a back seat although we do have to put a new piece here and there. The bulk of the money is in redemption and the best return on investment is in redemption because the same pieces earn year after year after year, some pieces within dollars of what they earned the first year. If you have to buy a new redemption piece to go in a location, you can take that old one, move it to another account that hasn't had it, and it will earn in that location. It's almost like pool tables—a long life and a terrific return on investment.

Are you looking to expand your redemption operation?

If the right opportunity presented itself I would. My biggest problem in doing redemption is we don't do anything totally on our own. We put games in for other people, so we've got go-kart courses where we provide the games on a split basis. My biggest problem is most people who get into the business really don't understand all the intricacies. There's a lot they don't know. You must have the right prizes, the mix of prizes, and the depth of prizes. You have to promote it. You can't just open the door and think people are coming. There's so much more to it. We try to educate them. But you run into people who think that because they have been to three or four games rooms, they know exactly what is involved in running a game room.

Is that getting better with more talk in the trade press and at trade shows?

You would be surprised at the number of people who still want to get into the business without any actual experience and very little research into it. I've had accounts that have changed hands and the people who took over had absolutely no experience in the business. But because it looked good on paper they bought it.

I know you've attended a number of the redemption field trips at the trade shows?

Every single one at the ACME or ASI shows.

Have they been helpful?

Very helpful! At the one in Chicago, I took photographs of the redemption counter at Aladdin's Castle in the mall that we went to. When we did a family entertainment center and laid out the game room for that, we kind of copied their redemption center layout. It turned out really well. That's the biggest advantage. You get to see other ideas, how others have done it, maybe the mistakes they've made so you don't make the same ones. You get to talk to others about things they've tried, what did work, and what didn't work. It's not just the places you visit but you get ideas from the other guys on the bus who are from all over the country. You can talk in a non-competitive way and just trade stories.

I know reams of trade press and hours of seminars have been spent on this topic, but are there several keys to a successful redemption operation that you keep in mind?

(Long sigh) I guess the key is you have to have the right prizes. Although the redemption game by itself has excitement in winning the tickets, there has got to be something to trade in for. The prize mix is a key part.

Do you get heavily involved in working on the ticket percentaging of games?

We are looking at what is the ticket average for a particular game, but we are also looking at what is the average for the whole room. *Skee-Balls* are going to be lower than say *Big Haul, Cyclone,* or *Wheel `Em In* because it is a faster play. There has been some discussion in the trade press over the last few years on how the fast coin games were a detriment because they really sucked up the money and people didn't get play value. But when you look at the room, what do they flock to? What makes the most money? It's the games that produce the most tickets, and I don't know what to say about it.

In other words, there is a player demand for them?

Yes. If there was a demand for the high entertainment, low ticket games, they would be making the most money. The ones that make the most money are the fast play games that pay out a higher percentage of tickets. You are talking about an average of three tickets for a *Skee-Ball* compared to eight or nine tickets for a *Big Haul* or a *Wheel `Em In.* But overall, you are looking at an average for the room that might be five or six.

"I think as long as we can find things to entertain people at a price range they are willing to pay for that entertainment, the industry is going to be here."

Switching subjects, are you involved in tournaments or leagues?

We tried dart leagues four years ago. For our size company, it was just too labor intensive. It really had to be promoted. I had a friend who had successful leagues going and he had worked every night for two years in locations building it up, but once that intense promotion was removed it did not sustain itself. You must have somebody working that day in and day out.

Let's talk about the dollar coin. Can you relate some of things you've done with the dollar coin in your own operations?

We started using the Susan B. Anthony when we started putting *Daytonas* in bars. We were having the "horrible" problem of the money pan filling up and overflowing. We went to dollar coins because they would take up less space in the money pan.

Then as one location was a success we started doing some others. We even converted pool tables to take a single dollar coin. We have jukeboxes that just take dollar coins. I think just about all but one bar is set on dollar coin for anything we can put in there.

So has your bank gotten used to you showing up and asking for large quantities of Susan B. Anthonys?

You have to get them $1,000 at a time, and we were usually ordering $2,000 at a time. The first order took a while, but now we can usually get $1,000 or $2,000 in a week's time.

Taking that into consideration, do you think we need a new dollar coin?

I don't know that we need a new one. We probably put $10,000 or $12,000 worth of Susan B.s in circulation in the process. The first place we did, we spray painted the dollar coins gold so they would be different and people would notice them. The second, third, and every one after that we didn't bother and nobody seemed to notice the difference. I even heard some of the customers refer to them as dollar tokens not realizing they are actual currency. It didn't seem to affect them one way or another. They would just put $1 or $5 in the changer and play *Daytona, Alpine Racer,* or even our golf games. I have no problem with acceptance from the public.

What about the whole issue of price per play. While there's talk about it being stagnant there are people like yourself and others doing innovative things. Do you think we will see more of that?

I'm intrigued with the concept of the nickel arcade and bigger bang for the customer in terms of value. I know that's the exact opposite of the direction we have taken with the dollar coins where on the golf games we give them five holes for a dollar coin as opposed to three holes for 50 cents. But there is a question and a concern related to giving the customers a value for their money. That gets back to return on investment for us. The games that we buy have to be of an entertainment value so people want to spend money, and we have to be able to price them at a level where people feel it's a value and yet we can make the payments on them. All of this ties together. If I knew I could make more money on dime play, obviously we would change everything to dime play.

What are your thoughts on the entrance of big computer companies like Microsoft and Intel and the development of a PC platform?

I'm interested because it's something different. It's a new player. It's a new mix. It shakes up the status quo. I think we have a tendency every now and then to get a little stagnant with the mix of games and the theme of games. By bringing new players in, if nothing else, it will expose the industry to some different ideas. We've been through times like this with laser disc games, there have been some CD-ROM games by conventional companies, there are games on hard drives, and now we are going to a PC platform which might expose the industry to some different game programmers. Time will tell. I'm anxious to see what it is going to look like at the show in Atlanta as far as having some working games. I know that probably the first few games will not be the greatest. But I think down the road it will add something to the industry.

On that same subject, do you see networked play in the future and do you have any ideas about getting involved in NANI?

> **"What makes the most money? It's the games that produce the most tickets."**

That's a tough call. NANI is kind of the first example out there, but I'm not sure it is the be all end all. It may be the thing that gets other people thinking as other stuff comes on the market. In Richmond we have a canal they were building in the early 1800s that was supposed to go to the Mississippi River and the Ohio Valley for trade. Before they could finish it along came the railroad, and that was a better idea. It's not to say the canal wouldn't have worked, but something better came along. With a lot of these companies, like the Incredible Technologies golf and bowling and its own tournament system and PlayNet with its system, it remains to be seen who will be involved before it's over.

Thank you, Charles, we appreciate you taking time to talk with us.

I'm surprised you didn't ask me about my take on the industry with all the talk of doom and gloom.

OK, shoot.

Well so many people are talking about how bad collections are, how the industry is down, or that sales are down, but it seems to me that this business runs in cycles and anybody who has been in it for any amount of time knows it runs in cycles. Basically for the last 60 some years our job has been selling inexpensive entertainment. I think as long as we can find things to entertain people at a price range they are willing to pay for that entertainment, the industry is going to be here.

Thanks again. ▲

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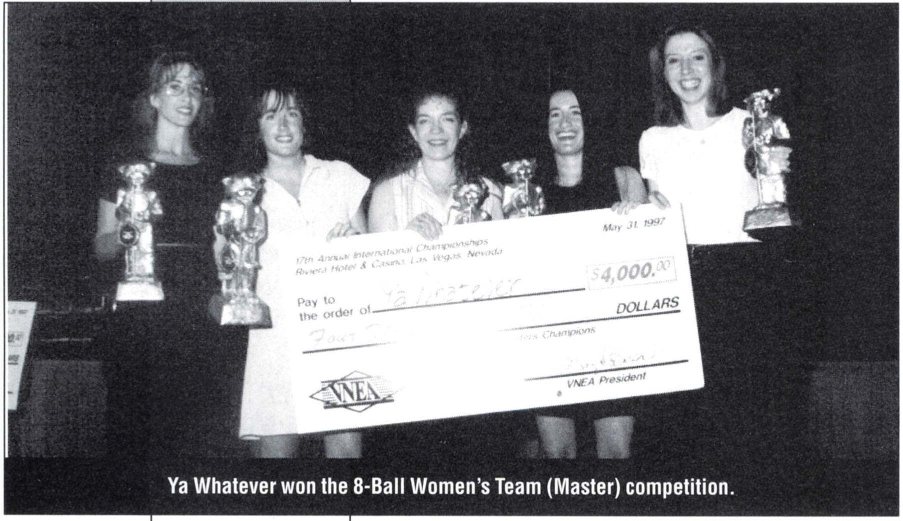

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17th Annual International Championships
Riviera Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada
Pay to the order of
$4,000.00
DOLLARS
Champions
VNEA President
VNEA

Ya Whatever won the 8-Ball Women's Team (Master) competition.

The Valley National Eight-Ball Association arrived in Las Vegas earlier this summer with 190 Valley *ZD-7* pool tables and a 48-foot semi truck packed full of tournament and party paraphernalia for the 10 days of pool action that would follow. An increase in the number of players and scheduled activities this year required an extra day of tournament play.

With over 5,000 VNEA pool league players packing the entire north end of the Vegas strip, the championships recorded a record-breaking 3,270 singles entrants and 812 teams competing for a total cash purse of $433,000.

The players spawned from 202 operator members of the VNEA's charter holder base, which totals 400. They came from across the country and around the world with the following countries represented: Australia, Bahamas, Bermuda, Canada, Germany, Malaysia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Portugal, and Spain.

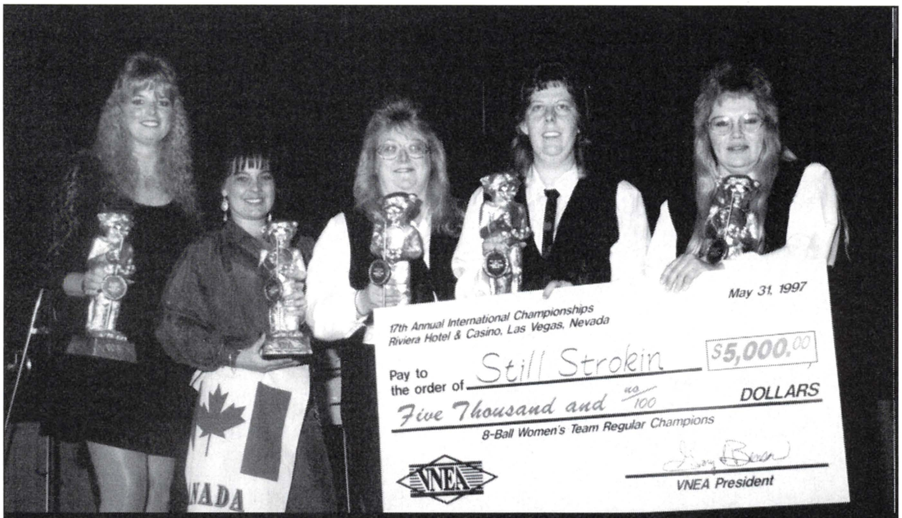
Several mini-tournaments were held throughout the week including the ever popular Scotch Doubles competition, and two of the major sponsors, Huebler Industries and McDermott Cues, participated in the daily cue stick giveaways during the singles and team events.

The conclusion of the singles and Scotch Doubles events set the stage for the Team Opening Ceremonies in the parking lot of the Riviera Grand, which was decorated as a party pavilion and played host to over 2,000 players in attendance. The ceremonies got underway with the traditional flag ceremony representing the international depth of the event.

A Suds & Chips Mixer was held to recognize the winners in the singles competition, and a VNEA Hall of Fame ceremony followed with the induction of five amateur pool players:

17th Annual International Championships
Riviera Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada
May 31, 1997
Pay to the order of Champs AC's
$7,500.00
Seven Thousand Five Hundred and 00/100 DOLLARS
8-Ball Open Team Masters Champions
VNEA
VNEA President

The champions in the 8-Ball Open Team (Master) were Champs AC's.


May 31, 1997
17th Annual International Championships
Riviera Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada
Pay to the order of Still Strokin
$5,000.00
Five Thousand and 00/100 DOLLARS
8-Ball Women's Team Regular Champions
VNEA
VNEA President
NADA

Still Strokin' came out on top in the 8-Ball Women Team event.

Ralph Allen of Music Service, Dennis Favor of NTS, Shelly Hudson of Elum Music, Diana Minor of India Amusements, and Mike Staff of C & N Sales. On the same evening a dramatic fireworks display served as an overture for the internationally acclaimed performer Balloon Man and the non-stop sounds of Flamingo Express.

A Hard Luck competition for teams knocked out of regular play saw the following winners in men's and women's categories: Road Warriors of Ontario Amusement, Classic Shooters of Amusement Systems, Sportsmen's # 2 of Shaffer Services, Born To Run of Calwest Coin, Mickey's #1 of Tri Area Amusement, We're Junk of Town & Country, Suite 9 Blues of V.V.S., Wagon Wheel of A. Van Brackel, The Lady Sharks of Varner Vending, Royalton Blues of Selectromatic, and Iron City of R & M Music.

Following tournament play, more than 3,000 people turned out for the awards banquet with tournament director Gary Benson of Ft. Collins, Colo., giving out divisional awards. Members of the international delegation were also honored.

Adding to the festivities were donations to the VNEA junior program and several giveaways including specials cues from Mali & Co. and Huebler Industries. A one-of-a-kind cue donated by Paul Huebler worth $7,500 was also raffled. Special thanks went out to Mark Schiller, president of Valley Recreation Products, as well as Mali, Huebler, McDermott, NSM, and a number of charter holders including Vince Leavey, Peter Kapsalis, and John Angell. All-star teams were also announced at the banquet and received satin jackets or sweatshirts. Headlining the banquet entertainment bill were comedians Wild Willy Parsons and Craig Shoemaker.

Earlier in the week, at a reception honoring Benson of High Country/TD Rowe in Colorado, lifetime sanction cards were presented to several longtime personalities from Valley Recreation Products chairman of the board Chuck Milhelm. The cards were issued to Anthony Falcigno of Fun Time Games, Frank Fry of Oregon, Conrad Burkman of Billiard News, Benson, and Jerry Briesath of The Pool School.

The reception was also the setting for the presention of the 1997 Warren Kelly Meritorious Service Award to Vince Leavey of Western Automatic Music of Ilderton, Ontario, Canada. For the second year in a row, the President's Choice Award went to Paul Huebler of Huebler Industries in Linn, Mo.

Another unique feature of the championships was the Red Jones Team Uniform Award presented to Sure Shots Looney Tunes of Gem Music in Ohio and Third Base of H & B Music in Ohio. As in year's past, professional pool instructor Jerry Briesath was on hand to give instruction, while Dr. Cue Tom Rossman held his Artistic Shot Making Contest. Speed Pool specialist David Pearson gave an exhibition of his talents, running a table in 26.5 seconds, and was on had to conduct the World Speed Tour Finals, which saw Marvin Nash of C & B Music take top honors

Other special event winners were Tim Tonjum of D & R/Star in Minnesota and Dee Dee Lloyd of Southland Amusements in North Carolina in the Speed Break contest and James Stevens of Twin States Music in Wisconsin and George Lyons of Shaffer Service in Ohio in the Charter Holder Scotch Doubles Challenge. William Goodson of Indiana won the Valley *El*

Tigre Home Pool Table giveaway.

The VNEA sent out thanks to the following corporate members: Falcon Cues, Mueller Sporting Goods, NSM, New Image, Predator, Viking Cue, Mali, Paragon Cues, J & J America, Championship Billiard Factory—and manufacturer members: Valley Recreation Products, LEANI Slate Company, Huebler Industries, and McDermott Cues. Each of the corporate members were presented with a beautiful stone cougar award by VNEA executive director Gregg Elliot.

Here's a look at the final results:

8-Ball Men's Team (Regular): 1st—8-Ball Express of High Country-TD Rowe in Colorado ($10,000); 2nd—Spain 1 of Import Pool Play in Spain ($8,000); 3rd—Trophies #1 of Shaffer Service in Ohio ($6,500).

8-Ball Men's Team (Master): 1st—Champs A.C.'s of Town and Country Amusement in Canada ($7,500); 2nd—Tips & Taps of United Music Company in North Dakota ($5,500); 3rd—Charbels I of State Amusement Co. in Virginia ($3,500).

8-Ball Women's Team (Regular): 1st—Still Strokin' of G & G Enterprises in Canada ($5,000); 2nd—JJ's Billiards I of Music Service in South Dakota ($3,500); 3rd—Time Clock Titties of Central Distributing in Nebraska.

8-Ball Women's Team (Master): 1st—Ya Whatever of Challenger Vending in Canada ($4,000); 2nd—Tough2Outdo of Wal-Mac Amusements in Canada ($2,500); 3rd—Sportz-N-Spudz of Shaffer Service in Ohio ($1,500).

9-Ball Women's Singles (Regular): 1st— Christy Barsky of A & B Vending in New Mexico ($1,100); 2nd—Linda Carter of Digital Music Systems in Washington ($850); 3rd—Marilyn Smith of Central Distirbuting in Nebraska and Jody Dreger of Wal-Mac Amusements in Canda ($675).

9-Ball Women's Singles (Master): 1st—Kathie McDonald of Challenger Vending in Canada ($1,200); 2nd—Mary Waak of Bullseye Inc. in Wisconsin ($900); 3rd—Tracy Cantrell of Shaffer Service and Joanie Krenning-Chain of High Country/TD Rowe in Colorado ($600).

9-Ball Men's Singles (Regular): 1st—Denver Barger of Indy Amusements in Indiana ($2,300); 2nd—Tony Piazza of High Country/TD Rowe in Colorado ($1,700); 3rd—Dan Walton of Indy Amusements and Al Jones of Star Amusements, both in Colorado ($1,320).

9-Ball Men's Singles (Master): 1st—Ricky Graczyk of Town & Country Amusement in Canada ($2,200); 2nd—Dave Hemmah of Music Service in South Dakota ($1,500); 3rd—Dave Black of Cheyenne Music & Vending in Wyoming and Craig Stainbrook of United Music Company in North Dakota ($950).

8-Ball Women's Singles (Senior): 1st—Sandra Chamberlain of R & M Music Company of Oklahoma ($600); 2nd—Shirley More of James Vending Corp. in Kentucky ($440); 3rd—Lee Karnes of A. Van Brackel & Sons of Ohio and Shirley Kilian of Quality Entertainment Company in Oregon ($250).

8-Ball Women's Singles (Regular): 1st—Silvia Lopez of Import Pool Play in Spain ($1,850); Lisa Blaylock of Varner Vending in Arizona ($1,300); 3rd—Tanya Harig of United Music Company in North Dakota and Dena Leath of Gapter Amusement in Wyoming ($1,100).

8-Ball Women's Singles (Master): 1st—Joanne Ashton of Challenger Vending in Canada ($1,500); 2nd—Gari Jo Bloomberg of Rushmore Amusement in South Dakota ($1,000); 3rd—Timi Bloomberg of Rushmore Amusement in South Dakota and Tracy Cantrell of Shaffer Service in Ohio ($750).

8-Ball Men's Singes (Senior): 1st—Al Lougheed of Western Automatic Amusements in Canada ($1,000); 2nd—Ron Allman of Indy Amusements in Indiana ($750); 3rd—Dave Schnieder of Elum Music Co. in Ohio and George Schrader of United Distributors of Kansas ($525).

8-Ball Men's Singles (Regular): 1st—Dee Adkins of Shaffer Service in Ohio ($3,650); 2nd—Marc Klein of C & N Sales in Minnesota ($2,600); 3rd—Phil Tourangeau of Wal-Mac Amusements in Canada and David Alcaide of Import Pool Play in Spain ($1,900).

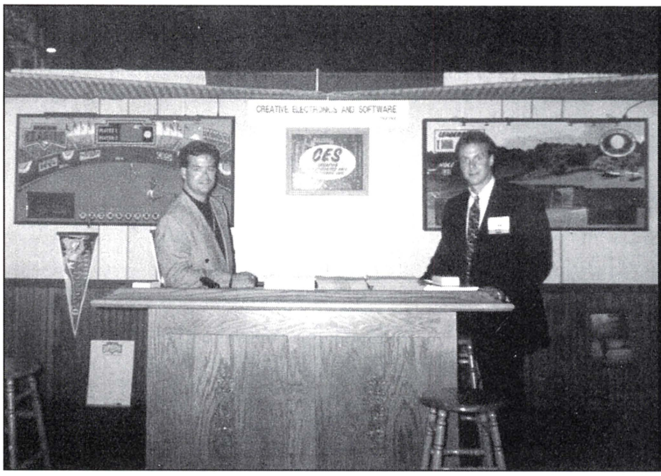
8-Ball Men's Singles (Master): 1st—Gene Albrecht of Twin States Music in Wisconsin ($2,500); 2nd—Dave Hemmah of Music Service in South Dakota ($1,700); 3rd—Shaun Budd of Trueline Billiards in Australia and Bob Matson of United Music Company in North Dakota ($1,050). ▲

The Balloon Man provided entertainment for the players.

COMPANY
PROFILE

C.E.S. revives wall-mount games

PERFECT FOR BARS



Joe Bundra (r) and fellow C.E.S. employee Adam Moloney prepare to answer questions about their products during a recent trade show.

C.E.S.'s wall games entertain even when it's a slow night.

Creative Electronics and Software, a Chicago area engineering and OEM firm, has supported major coin-op manufacturers since 1989. Currently C.E.S. provides specialized board design and assembly to some of the biggest manufacturing names in the business. The company's 100-plus employees are located in two factories in South Elgin, Ill.

The company is now using its expertise to take you back into tavern locations. Wall-mount games were a favorite with tavern customers years ago when Gremlin cornered the market on that type of game. After Gremlin left the coin-op industry, there was a niche that was waiting to be filled.

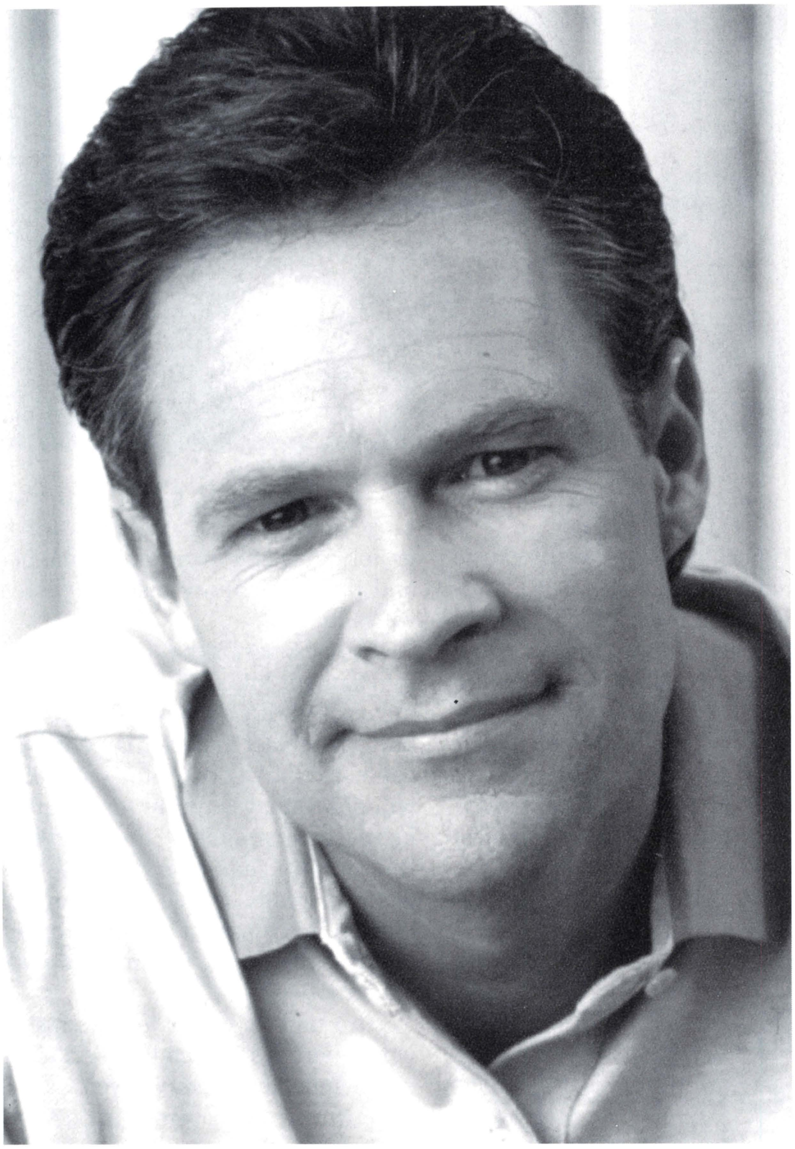
C.E.S. saw the need and decided that it was ready for the challenge. "Veteran operators recall the wall-mount games as a popular novelty from the early days about the time of the first video boom. They are really excited to see these games again," stated C.E.S. vice-president Joe Bundra. "Everybody appreciates the modern design and the fact that these games take up no floor space while adding steady, solid income to locations. The response from operators and distributors has been overwhelming and we are preparing for the steady growth that is inevitable as the word gets out."

COMPANY HISTORY

C.E.S. was founded and is run by president Bob Kowalski. Prior to C.E.S. he served as director of electronic engineering at URL, a subsidiary of Stern Electronics, and vice president of Pro-Logic, an engineering design firm.

Bundra has chalked up 16 years in the coin-op industry, having gotten his start at Interlogic in 1981. When Interlogic was purchased by Konami he remained there until 1988 as the purchasing and operations manager. He left the video game giant and joined Bromley, a company known for its popular redemption games. Bundra quips that he's been moving up in a timely fashion as he explains: "When I was at Konami, I learned the video game industry from the ground up and of course, video was king at that time. When I made the move to Bromley redemption was hot and I learned redemption. Now I couldn't be at a better company to focus on street operators in dire need of equipment that will make them money for a long time to come. When I had the opportunity to join this relatively young company, I jumped at the chance because I saw tremendous potential. Now that I've been here a year, I feel even more confident about the future."

At C.E.S. Bundra is working with many of the distributors that he had forged relationships with in the past. "I am determined to work with distributors in selling our games because I've seen how well that works in the past. Since C.E.S. is the new kid on the block sometimes it takes a little convincing. However, our products are so good they speak for themselves," he commented.



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What is so attractive about wall-mount games is they take up no floor space.

Bundra is also talking with operators about the potential with wall games. He said that having equipment like this can sometimes be a double-edged sword. Here's why according to Bundra: "I have had operators tell me that they love the games but they're afraid to buy one because then all of their locations will want one and they don't want to buy 100 of them! Now this is frustrating, but I realize it will take time."

So what are some of the tips or advantages that Bundra uses when talking to customers? "I ask them if they remember the old wall units, and if they do they usually tell me they were cash cows. Then I remind them that these new games take up no floor space and will sit on the wall up to 10 years and make nothing but money. Believe it or not, I've run into operators still operating the old wall units! Now if 20 years is not longevity, I don't know what is."

THE GAMES

C.E.S. offers three titles in the classic wall-mount collection. *Trap Shoot Classic* is a two-team trap shoot game that challenges players to accurately shoot clay pigeons out of the sky. *Country Club Classic* is a four-player golf game that asks players to drive, pitch, and putt through 18 challenging holes of golf. *Home Run Classic* gives two players a thrilling baseball theme that lets them slug it out for the most runs.

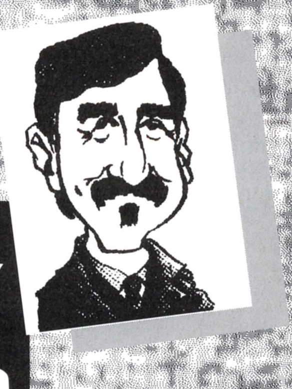
All three versions come with a wall-mount cashbox and one wireless remote control that has an effective range up to 100 feet. All games are operator adjustable regarding game play and pricing. There's also a one-year warranty.

The best part is that C.E.S. provides tournament kits for in-house tournaments. Bundra declared that it is an undisputed fact that tournaments raise collections. "Any operator you talk to will agree that running tournaments increases revenues in the machines. Running tournaments on these wall games is really simple with our step-by-step tournament guide. Tournaments give you the potential to make more money."

At a time in the industry's history when there is so much focus on family entertainment centers, we were curious to know why C.E.S. zeroed in on another segment, street locations. Bundra explains that street operators had fewer games available that were designed for their unique needs in street locations, which include a huge number of bars and taverns. "I've been in the industry long enough to realize that street operators are being ignored by many of the major manufacturers," said Bundra. "Realistically, even if street operators could afford some of the expensive simulators, that type of equipment is not well suited to the traditional bar and tavern locations. Our games are reasonably priced and I always stress the longevity. Street operators are in a position of having to seek new opportunities to keep their routes viable. I'm pleased to be with a company actively helping them accomplish that goal. Stop by our booth at the upcoming AMOA and IAAPA shows to preview more innovative games being introduced."

The company is waiting to hear from you at (847)695-0023. ▲

Just the Hard Technical Facts!



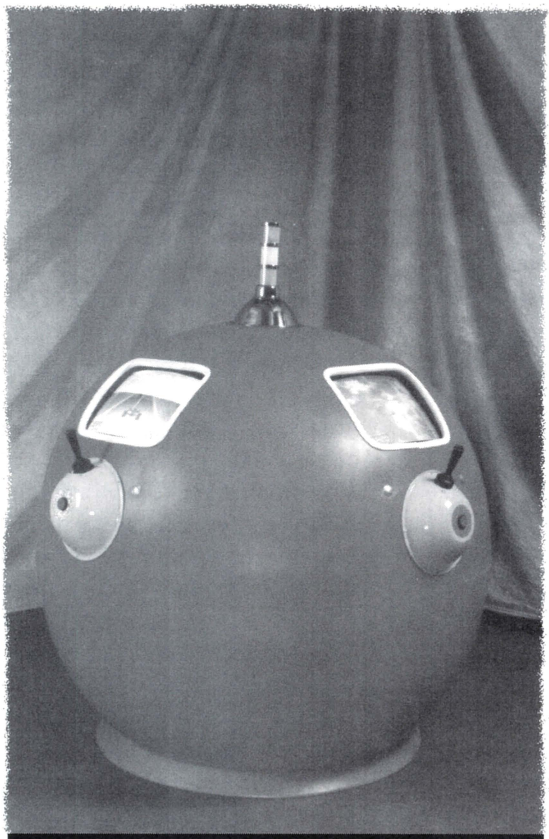
Randy Fromm

EXCLUSIVELY IN:

PLAY METER Magazine
FOR THE COIN-OP ENTERTAINMENT/FEC INDUSTRY

PRODUCT
PREVIEW

Carousel enters new SPHERE OF INTEREST



Video Sphere offers two kid-pleasing games.

Question: What is four feet around, offers two interactive video games geared to children, and fits in just about any location?

ANSWER: Carousel International Corp.'s new *Video Sphere* that affords simple, kid-pleasing games at two player stations: the *Speedster II Indy Racing* game where players dodge cowpies (the more they dodge the more points they score), and the *Skycopter II* flying-themed game that gives players splat balls to shoot at planes and blimps.

The games are housed in a colorful, durable plastic sphere with two 13-inch monitors, joystick controls, flashing top lights when points are scored, and an audio package that includes sound effects, music, and simulated speech.

An attract mode gives players a sample of the game, while colorful flags geared to the game themes alert players to its location. When high scores are achieved, the games award free play. Options include a ticket dispenser and free play start button. *Video Sphere* is available in a choice of teal, purple, and bright pink.

Video Sphere (patent-pending) uses Atari's Jaguar hardware/software cartridge-based system. It was tested in a McDonald's in Eldon, Mo., where the fast food chain's Gene Snellen said, "The piece turned out to be a great addition to our McDonald's Playland. The children really enjoyed the interaction of the games."

Carousel has expanded beyond its traditional kiddie ride line to fill what it feels is a niche market–games for children old enough to move on from kiddie rides but not quite ready for larger games.

According to Carousel's Steven Veatch, "*Video Sphere* is good for anyone who wants something unique. It is particularly compatible with soft modular play structures. The ball is universal, and it's easy to change the cartridge and flags to keep the unit fresh."

Veatch affirms that a third game is in development, and more are planned for the future. *Video Sphere* goes beyond the usual amusement center applications, he says, pointing out the new trend for banks to install interactive rooms with activities such as *Video Sphere* for customers' children.

Video Sphere is suitable for any place where kids are found, from arcades to FECs to family-style restaurants. Other sites that come to mind are discount department stores, groceries, shopping centers, and the new explosion of factory outlet malls that are cropping up all over the country. A pediatrician or dentist's office is also ideal.

For more information or distributor referral, contact Veatch at (800)325-3353 or (573)392-7122; fax (573)392-7125. ▲

NDA Team Dart XII

hosts top darters in Las Vegas

Opening ceremonies at the NDA's 12 Annual Team Dart Tournament.

Over 5,000 soft tip darters recently competed at the National Dart Association's 12th Annual Team Dart Tournament for prizes totaling over $200,000 and the title of World Champion. The event took place at the Riviera Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, Nev.

Four-person teams from 43 states and eight foreign countries competed in Team Dart XII. International teams in attendance came from Australia, Austria, Spain, Germany, Switzerland, France, Canada, and Italy. Team Dart XII was the first event in which the NDA used its new classification and ranking format Points Per Dart and Marks Per Round to classify and rank teams.

"With our new classification and ranking format teams were more accurately ranked which resulted in some exciting competition," noted NDA executive director Mike Smythe.

The week began with competition in the 01 events and ended with the cricket events. One of the highlights of the tournament was the International Challenge during which a team from each country, featuring their best shooters, competed for the trophy and bragging rights. The final match saw France beating out Austria, last year's winner, for the title. Later that day, the NDA celebrated the arrival of the competitors at is opening flag ceremonies. The parade was followed by a party featuring the band Papa Do Run Run.

Competition concluded Saturday night with a dinner party to celebrate the close of another Team Dart and recognize the winners. The evening ended with an appearance of nationally renowned comedian Don Riley, who lit up the crowd with his show.

The NDA, which is headquartered in Indianapolis, is a non-profit international association offering standardized formats and rules for league and tournament play. The association's other national competition, the Singles and Doubles International, will take place this year in St. Paul, Minn., Oct. 28-Nov.1. For more information, call (800)808-9884 or check them out on the Web site (http://www.nda.org).

In Laws II finished second in the Open Team 301 (Level 3) competition.

Here's a look at the final results:

Ladies Team 301 (Level1): 1st—Holli Hoffmeyer, Faith Kleinow, Robin Lunn, and Lori Riley ($1,250); 2nd—Nancy Grosenbach, Sue Murawski, Sherry Wade, and Cathy Yeager ($825); 3rd—Nancy Fox, Lisa Lorona, Michele Morris, and Claudia Paul ($550).

Ladies Team 301 (Level 2): 1st—Laura Goodhart, Linda January, Allyson Old, and Gladys Timm ($1,250); 2nd—Tonya Annis, Linda Haefner, Shane Larsen, and Pauline Wilmes ($825); 3rd—Barbara Brenner, Karen Burton, Annette Green, Leanne Lowe, and Carol Ousley ($550).

Ladies Team 301 (Level 3): 1st—Colleen Ganestad, Lora Ganestad, Peg

Tokheim, and Brenda Wood ($1,250); 2nd—Scott Anderson, Trina Becker, Laura Block, Marcy Roy, and Kim Hildebrand ($825); 3rd—Pam Malburg, Michelle Puzdrakiewicz, Wendy Scott, Kelly Scaggs, and Bruce Walters ($825).

Ladies Team 301 (Level 4): 1st—Lisa Colon, Pat Donohoe, Donna Fadel, Gloria Putzu, and Mercedes Schweering ($1,250); 2nd—Sherrie Duckworth, Sue Duckworth, Michelle Hanly, and Cindy Johnson ($825); 3rd—Judy Schwanke, Tammy Schwanke, Linda Start, and Dorine Vanderlinde ($550).

Ladies Masters Team 501: 1st—Pam Dischler, Carolyn Nessman, Sharon Sonntag, and Jule Stellpflug ($1,650); 2nd—Patty Arden, Joe Krumwiede, Meradith McGee, and Jennifer Nadiak ($1,100); 3rd—Teenamarie Dunningham, Sandy Frantz, Peg Quezada, and Christy Savala ($750).

Open Team 301 (Level 1): 1st—Andy Bernal, Ben Marjamaa, Steve Willingdale, and Jim Zillmer ($2,200); 2nd—Al Molthan, Mike Murphy, Mike Reilley, and Todd Rouse ($1,650); 3rd—James Lee, Don Lyons, John Quinn, Perry Robinson, and Bruce Spence ($1,100).

Open Team 301 (Level 2): 1st—John Garno, Ray Payne, Mick Quinn, and Shane Wilson ($2,200); 2nd—Alf Fay, Fred Garcia, Jan Myers, and Craig Soto ($1,650); 3rd—Richard Deweil, Jay Enfield, Annie Ralls, and Ken Ralls ($1,100).

Open Team 301 (Level 3): 1st—Tim Dillon, Danny Frymark, Christopher Gutierrez, and Jason Wage ($2,200); 2nd—Jim Granger, John Kuck, Paul Polzin, and Brian Ubl ($1,650); 3rd—Karly Buckly II, Tom Castellanos, Erik Haven, and Aaron Hill ($1,100).

Open Team 301 (Leve 4): 1st—Bret Culey, Ronnie Mikkelson, Bruce Nordine, and Brian Outzen ($2,200); 2nd—Pam Dischler, Darrell Frenzel, Elliot Garcia, Thomas Patzner, Lawrence Robe, and Bill Zolandz ($1,650); 3rd—Carlos Acosta, Alfredo Amyatch, Pedro Morales, and Victor Ramos ($1,100).

Open Team 301 (Level 5): 1st—Kelly Rebel, Julie Schwab, Maryann Sullivan, and Harley Walker ($2,200); 2nd—Steve Alexander, Ed Alvis, John Berg, and Dale Kendall ($1,650); 3rd—Jason Engel, Mike Grunst, Dave Hulke, and Brent Otto ($1,100).

Mixed Couples 301 (Level 1): 1st—Steve Armstrong, Bart Bonnstetter, Kathy Nelson, and Monica Reese ($1,200); 2nd—Linda Haefner, Staci Proehl, Steve Saxon, and Randy Wilmes ($850); 3rd—Diane Bowen, Hollie Barewer, Chuck Strack, and Dan Strack ($550).

Mixed Couples 301 (Level 2): 1st—Andy Bernal, Marcia Garissmeyer, Claudette Wildes, and David Wildes ($1,200); 2nd—Michael Avalos, Ginger Beedie, Ed Sandburg, and Kim Whinnery ($850); 3rd—Skip Smith, Craig Swaner. Stacy Swaner, and Michele Wolle ($550).

Mixed Couples 301 (Level 3): 1st—Ken Jaques, Janet Pratner, Gene Sowle, and Judy Straight ($1,200); 2nd—Gary Clark, Judy Liebfried, Jim Morton, and Gloria Riley ($850); 3rd—Tracy Jason, Troy Jason, Brian Lipsinki, and Nancy Lipsinki ($550).

Masters Team DI/DO 501: 1st—Chris Kotal, Walter Kubler, Frank Mast, Marcus Schulte, and Bernhard Willert ($6,000); 2nd—Bruce Holmes, Todd Kurtz, Tim Tegel, and Rick Wnuk ($4,000); 3rd—Michael Bates, John Gray, Lucky Newberry, and Tom Slivka ($2,500).

Ladies Team Cricket (Level 1): 1st—Nancy Grosenbach, Sue Nurawski, Sherry Wade, and Cathy Yeager ($900); 2nd—Chris Castrovillari, Pam Fisk, Teresa Griggs, and Joyce Reinhardt ($675); 3rd—Darla Martinez, Lori Pfannenschmid, Kim Trujillo, and Janie Utley ($450).

Ladies Team Cricket (Level 2): 1st—Pam Malburg, Michelle Puzdrakiewicz, Wendy Scott, and Kelly Skaggs ($900); 2nd—Lynn Duda, Sharon Johansen, Claudia Limon, and Carol Lyons ($675); 3rd—Barbara Brenner, Karen Burton, Annette Green, and Carol Ousley ($450).

Ladies Team Cricket (Level 3): 1st—Robin Bartholomew, Carole Boble, Margie Chavez, Mardi Saxton, and Toby Smith ($900); 2nd—Jacqui Flowers, Ding Mancuso, Joyce Patino, and Kathy Rhodes ($675); 3rd—Trina Becker, Laura Block, Marcy Foy, and Kim Hildebrand ($450).

Ladies Masters Team Cricket: 1st—Pam Dischler, Carolyn Nessman,

The Wild Dartz were the runners up in the Ladies Team Cricket (Level 2).

The team of Thumbs Up Pub won the Ladies Masters Team Cricket (Level 1) event.

Sharon Sonntag, and Julie Stellpflug ($1,650); 2nd–Ruth Ebner, Petra Parahammer, Stefanie Reiter, and Lisa Steinbach ($1,100); 3rd–Teenamarie Cunningham, Sandy Frantz, Peg Quezada, and Christy Savala ($750).

Open Team Cricket (Level 1): 1st–Andy Albright, Terry Denler, Jim Hopper, and Kevin Logan ($1,500); 2nd–Jim Frost, Jeff Futch, Howard Hill, Jim Jackson, and Greg Madera ($900); 3rd–Adam Altenbaumer, Jason Bernard, Charlie Hopkins, Norm Myers, and Otto Robinson ($500).

Open Team Cricket (Level 2): 1st–Greg Barnes, Mike Brull, Jim Finley, and Billy Stansill ($1,500); 2nd–John Cazazza, Jason Davis, Tim Johnston, Jim Mynes, and Ben Scott ($900); 3rd–Dennis Babbit, Rick Krause, Jim McDonald, Chris Roderick, and Nate Verville ($500).

Open Team Cricket (Level 3): 1st–Scot Buschner, Stee Lobato, Mike Luff, and Tod Schiefelbein ($1,500); 2nd–Brandon Fujinaga, Lisa Fujinaga, Garrett Higa, and Earl Kaanoi ($900); 3rd–Glen Anderson, Curt Meyer, Will Schield, and Pete Van Hemert ($500).

Open Team Cricket (Level 4): 1st–Shawn Flaherty, Ted Lasater, Paul Nichols, and John Salaksilapa ($1,500); 2nd–James Berry, Scott Garcia, Tom MaGruder, and Kenny Mann ($900); 3rd–Pat Baaske, Bill Koeppen, Miguel Varela, and Mike Zapp ($500).

Open Team Cricket (Level 5): 1st–Karl Buckley, Tom Castellanos, Erik Have, and Aaron Hill ($1,500); 2nd–Joe Carbovero, Desiderio Galan, Ruben Jiminez, and Ascensio Tercero ($900); 3rd–Bryan Elmore, Jason Fiaschetti, Mike Ohrbert, and Shawn Seidelman ($500).

Mixed Couples Cricket (Level 1): 1st–Jim Frost, Jeff Futch, Howard Hill, Lori Thomas, and Mary Webb ($1,150); 2nd–Sheila Blackwell, Russ Maxwell, Dino Schade, and Kim Youngberg ($800); 3rd–Les Heiliger, Chris Saunders, Tim Saunders, and Ricky Trejo ($450).

Mixed Couples Cricket (Level 2): 1st–Fred Hasenfuss, Delphine Miller, Joe Romeo, and Lee Romeo ($1,150); 2nd–Debby McCaffrey, Carol Novakovich, David Samson, and Dax Wrights ($800); 3rd–Clark Gustaveson, Jackie Gustaveson, Scott Gustaveson, and Cheri Parker ($450).

Mixed Couples Cricket (Level 3): 1st–Harold Burnett, Lisa Burnett, Celeste Corkin, and Mike Corkin ($1,150); 2nd–Bryan Kahm, Mary Miller, Terry Sanchelli, and John Wittkopp ($800); 3rd–Cydni Burton, Dennis Levengood, Brian Outzen, and Kari Outzen ($450).

Masters Team Cricket: 1st–Holger Hurz, Michael Rauch, Michael Rosenauer, and Norbert Sauer ($5,000); 2nd–Bruce Holmes, Todd Kurtz, Tim Tegel, and Rick Wnuk ($3,500); 3rd–Richard Dement, Scott, Kirschner, John Kufer, and Moby Schroeder ($2,400).

Masters Mixed Couples: 1st–Bruce Holmes, Carolyn Nessman, Sharon Sonntag, and Rick Wnuk ($2,800); 2nd–Pam Dischler, Todd Kurtz, Julie Stellpflug, and Tim Tegel ($2,100); 3rd–Will Lint, Meradith McGee, Jennifer Nadiak, and Cliffor Wooton ($1,400). ▲

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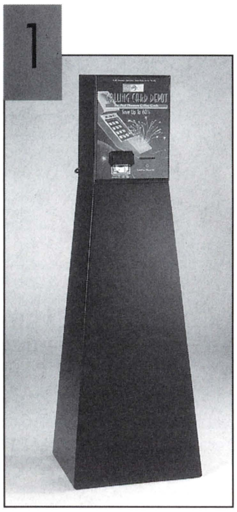

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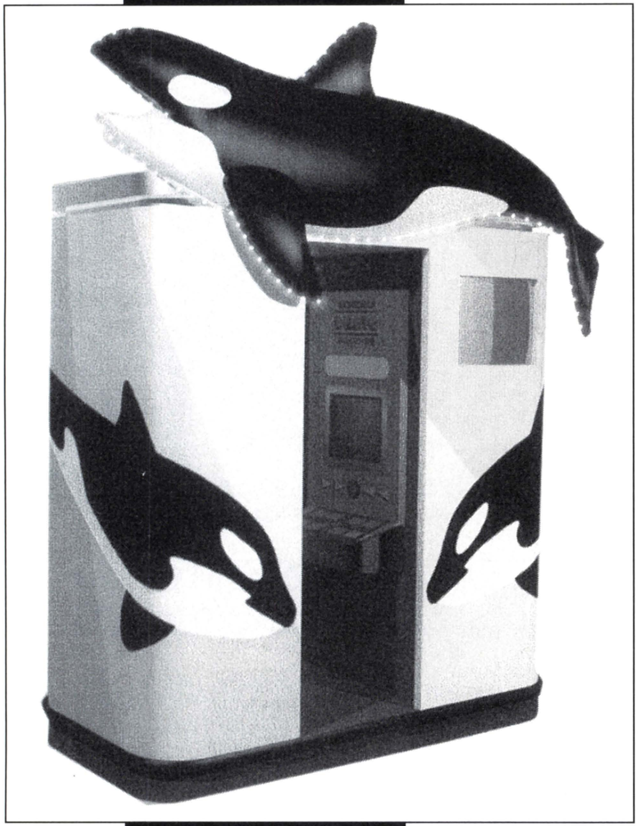
COMPANY
PROFILE

APBI set to make HISTORY WITH PHOTO STICKER BOOTHS

A specially themed APBI photo booth at Sea World.



While the image most remember is of President Clinton shaking hands with Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat and Israel's Prime Minister Yitzak Rabin in clinching a much anticipated Middle East peace agreement, *The Washington Times* photo of a high-level negotiator posing with Clinton in a Smithsonian photo booth ranks equally high for American Photo Booth Inc.'s Sam Attenberg.

Attenberg's company, known as APBI, got its start with those very photo booths placed in the Smithsonian in 1989 and still there today. "They did so well we decided it was a business in itself," explained Attenberg, a self-described entrepreneur who was working as a consultant to Eastman Kodak on Smithsonian projects including home video production and a one-hour photo processing center in the history building.

Included in the history collection is the first photo booth, which prompted the idea of updating the technology and placing one in the Kodak store. Attenberg first approached Kodak, which was not interested in the project.

"So I did it myself," he explained. "I had programmers design software and then built the photo booths. In 1989 it was very exciting and those same machines are still taking in a lot of money."

The difference between the original photo booths, which were chemical based, and the their modern incarnation is the use of dry electric printers, video cameras instead of film to take the photos, and computer-stored backgrounds–in this case depicting historically themed designs and people.

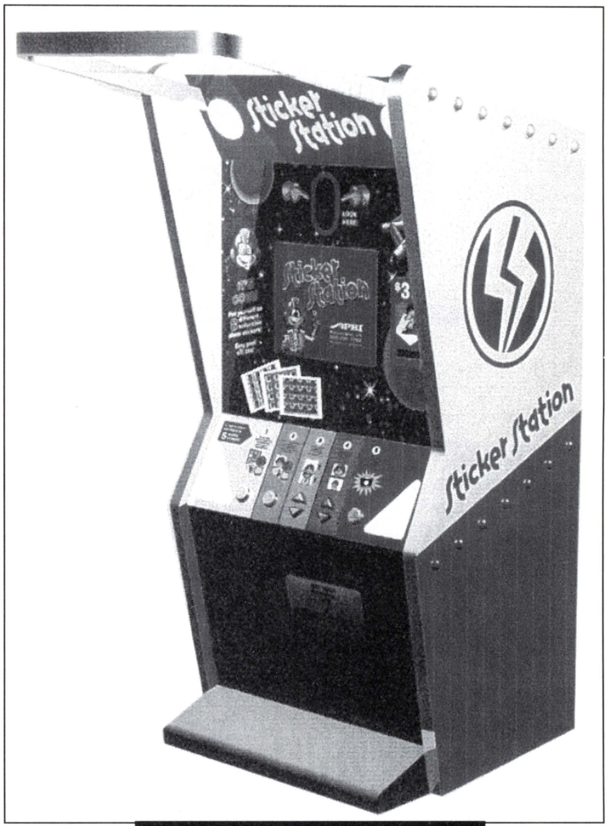
Photo booth customers can pose with specially themed backgrounds and famous people, including the President of the United States at the Smithsonian.

Sticker shock

Ironically, the Smithsonian also played a role in the configuration of APBI's newest attraction which it plans to market to the amusement industry, the *Sticker Station*, a photo booth which vends a sheet of peel-off stickers bearing the image of the customer within a customized background.

The actual design does not require the customer to sit inside a photo booth, and Attenberg said that came about when the Smithsonian inquired about the need for complying with the American with Disabilities Act, which provided a tough challenge for the photo booth operator.

However, it also brought with it the opportunity to cash in on one of the most popular overseas entertainment trends: photo sticker kiosks. To further seal its position, APBI received a patent on peel-off photo sticker vending machines in April of this year and recently signed a licensing agreement with Photo Vend International protecting the latter in selling its *Sticker Club*.



APBI's *Sticker Station.*

"We have never been focused on the coin-op market like Photo Vend," said Attenberg., whose company to date has concentrated solely on operating its own machines in what he calls "high-traffic, high-volume, prestige locations" including Sea World of California, the Bureau of Engraving & Printing, Busch Gardens, Foxwoods Resort Casino, and the World Trade Center in New York. In total, the company has machines in 100 locations mostly on the East and West Coasts.

APBI's *Sticker Station* runs on a $3 vend, takes no coins, utilizes proprietary technology, is wheelchair accessible, and features a button-control high-resolution camera with zoom and tilt control functions. All of the machines that the company has produced so far have been fully themed for its specific location.

"We understood this is what the marketplace we were seeking wanted," said Attenberg. "No other photo booths do that. The rest are just cookie cutter."

These market conditions have prompted APBI to introduce a coin-op line of *Sticker Stations* for sale that will have a universal look and sell for approximately $10,000. Attenberg also predicts "significant improvements that will leapfrog" current machines within the next 18 months.

APBI's current locations, where the company operates the booth, typically receive 35 percent of the revenue, and in circumstances where a national chain already has a service contract with a vendor that coin machine operator will receive a certain percentage of the revenue as well. APBI provides its locations with dedicated local service technicians. According to the company's computations, it is more financially advantageous for an operator to let APBI place its own machine in a location than to buy it himself.

"If we work through a coin operator, they don't usually even have keys to our machines," Attenberg explained. "In most cases we work with the location itself."

While APBI has eschewed exhibiting at national trade shows, with the exception of the 1990 IAAPA in its own backyard in Washington, D.C., this year the company plans to show its new line of products at both AMOA and IAAPA.

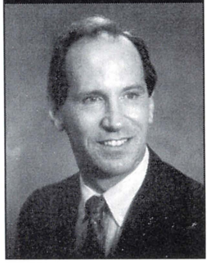
Attenberg said the company currently has 1,000 machines, all spoken for already, in production and plans to introduce 2,000 machines into the market by the end of this year with the ultimate goal of having 5,000 in place by the end of next year. APBI will also continue to license its technology, he added, to certain companies that produce a product that meets a reasonable quality level. ▲

Sam Attenberg's image on a *Sticker Station* product vend.

"I had programmers design software and then built the photo booths. In 1989 it was very exciting and those same machines are still taking in a lot of money."

LEGAL
EAGLE

TOM FRICKE



Debunking the myth of PROHIBITED FEATURES

The answers were those of James Dunlap, an Examiner in the Racketeering Records Analysis Unit, Laboratory Division of the FBI. This was testimony given on April 17 of this year at his deposition in a gambling device case in Broward County, Fla. Later in his deposition, Examiner Dunlap testified as follows:

> **Q: When you make that kind of determination, what statute or what standard are you looking at to give an opinion that this is or this is not a gambling device?**
>
> *A: There are protocols we must follow. We look for class characteristics that are associated with gambling. That would be consideration, chance, and reward. They would be from the federal statute dealing with gambling devices. I think United States Code section 1171 gives a definition. Also any related local statute.*
>
> **Q: Specifically in that case in Broward County did you apply the state statute or did you apply the federal statute in terms of coming up with your opinion in the case?**
>
> *A: In essence I applied both.*
>
> **Q: You found that machine to be in violation of both?**
>
> *A: In my opinion it has the class characteristics associated with a gambling device.*

Q: What is the difference in your mind between gambling and amusement?

A: One you have to look at what you're risking and what your reward is going to be. Again with the Cherry Master *machine it has those characteristics I mentioned, consideration, chance, with the expectation of reward. But then it also has some other indices associated with gambling that a true amusement device doesn't possess.*

Q: Because it looks like a slot machine, is that right?

A: No.

Q: OK. What other than the looks of the machine make it similar to slot machines in Las Vegas or that we normally associate with gambling? How else is that machine like a gambling device other than the fact that it looks like a slot machine?

A: Those three characteristics I mentioned, consideration, chance, and reward. This machine here has a multiple coin feature where you can put in up to...during the play today, it was up to a thousand credits. So that indicates to me that that machine can accept 9,999 credits if you choose to stand there and put in $20 bill after $20 bill. It has a multiple bet feature where you can get more than one credit at a time.

These machines can bet up to 96 credits each play. This is $4.80. It has a short duration of play. It's a time cycle where an amusement device is not a time cycle. It has a retention ratio, a house percentage. All these machines are set up to play at 55 percent which is a very, very low house percentage. It has a knockoff switch. There's no need for a knock-

> *off switch to take plays on a true amusement device. Because those are large accumulations of points. These machines have a power interrupt circuit. Again the power interrupt is here because if an individual has 1,000 credits on that device and the power goes out and it comes back on, if these points are gone you're going to have a rather disgruntled patron.*
>
> *It's mandated I know in Atlantic City by the Division of Gaming Enforcement that all the gambling devices have an interrupt circuit. The metering in the device, you have mechanical, electromechanical meters inside the device. Also on screen accounting to record the credits in, credits out. How many credits or money is placed in the machine and how many credits are knocked off.*

Examiner Dunlap testified in effect that he was applying the federal statute, the Gambling Devices Act of 1962. He testified further that the statute provided that all those features are prohibited. Let's look at the statute:

> *15 USCAs 1171 (Definitions) As used in this chapter the term "gambling device" means:*
>
> *(1.) Any so-called "slot machine" or any other machine or mechanical device an essential part of which is a drum or reel with insignia thereon, and (A) which when operated may deliver, as the result of the application of an element of chance, any money or property, or (B) by the operation of which a person may become entitled to receive, as the result of the application of an element of chance, any money or property; or*
>
> *(2.) Any other machine or mechanical device (including but not limited to roulette wheels and similar devices) designed and manufactured primarily for use in connection with gambling and (A) which when operated may deliver, as the result of the application of an element of chance, any money or property, or (B) by the operation of which a person may become entitled to receive, as the result of the application of an element of chance, any money or property....*

Did you see anything about knockoff switches? Multiple coin features? Duration of play? No. Because the Johnson Act doesn't say on its face that devices with these features are prohibited. It only prohibits devices that:

1. **Play by chance**
2. **Include either (a) drums or reels with insignia painted on them or (b) are "designed and manufactured primarily for use in connection with gambling."**
3. **Entitle the player to receive money or property (notice that this doesn't say free games).**

If that's all the federal statute says, where did Examiner Dunlap's list of prohibited features come from? It's entirely from the federal courts, and it's entirely misused by law enforcement, especially when testifying as experts in forfeiture proceedings. Since video began, the number of federal precedents concerning features that supposedly brand a coin-operated machine as a gambling device is small, and most precedents are opinions of trial courts, not the courts of appeal. Reliance on objective characteristics of a device to circumstantially prove its status as a gambling device, is highly desirable to law enforcement. Where it can convince a court to accept certain features as this circumstantial evidence, then it may obtain a forfeiture judgment without having to prove actual use of the device in connection with prize awards to players.

> ***"To say that a knockoff switch or power interrupt circuit on a skill game is unlawful would be like saying that the butler did it when nobody died."***

If you go all the way back to 1970, there are only 12 federal cases that have read prohibited features into the Johnson Act, and eight of those 12 started and ended in the trial courts. To me, treating the rationale of trial courts as settled law is the first sin of disingenuousness of the proponents of the talismanic approach to the Johnson Act.

Their second sin of disingenuousness is that the preponderance of these precedents came from forfeiture proceedings. Free games are not a prohibited award under the Johnson Act. It is generally not a violation of it to award free games by chance, event though it may be a violation of the laws of some states. To obtain a forfeiture without direct proof of actual award of money or property, the federal government must prove circumstantially that the use of the device in question was just a ruse, and that what is really going on is a crypto gambling operation.

Circumstantial evidence works like this. Say you have a murder in the manor house. A total of 12 people were present. They were the only ones who could have done it, but you have no direct proof of who the culprit was. You do, however, have direct proof that 11 of the 12 could not have done the deed, and no evidence that it was beyond the ability of the 12th person. You have proved the 12th person guilty by process of elimination.

This is the way the prohibited features idea works with coin-operated devices, from the government's point of view. Consider a device with the entire battery of features mentioned by Examiner Dunlap, and perhaps a few more that he didn't mention. You also have testimony that in crypto gambling operations, these features are used to enable the unlawful operation to function. You have just placed the suspect at the "scene of the crime" along with all other suspects, just like in a murder mystery. Now, to prove your case, you must eliminate all other suspects. How do you do this in a Johnson Act forfeiture case? Your expert testifies that there is no other use for these features except to facilitate unlawful gambling.

In the murder mystery example, you would think that the circumstantial case would have to be very strong in order to support a conviction, and you would be correct in that assumption. But the same rule does not apply in a federal forfeiture case. On the contrary, the federal government's burden in a Johnson Act forfeiture proceeding is incredibly mild. The government need only show probable cause to institute the forfeiture action. Once it has done this, the burden shifts to the person claiming return of the property. The claimant must show that it is more likely than not that the property was not subject to forfeiture. What this means, is that the government can take your property and in most cases the burden will be upon you to prove that the property was not prohibited by law. And if this doesn't convince you that it is almost a cake walk for the government to require you to prove your innocence, consider what probable cause is: "a reasonable ground for belief of guilt, supported by less than prima facie proof but more than mere suspicion." What does this boil down to? The testimony of a police officer who has not been involved in enough unlawful gambling investigations so that he knows the devices commonly used and the practices commonly employed. And they will call him an "expert." How do we defend the device? Explain the necessity not related to payoffs or elements of chance for every feature which the government's expert says is "associated with gambling."

The Gambling Devices Act of 1962 is actually an amendment of the Slot Machine Act of 1951. Much has been written about what was wrong with the 1951 act and why Congress had to amend it. In my view, the matter is worthy of a few sentences, no more. The 1951 Slot Machine Act prohibited only those machines which delivered money or property directly. The 1962 amendment broadened the act to eliminate the requirement of direct delivery of money or property. The amendment now reached individual payoffs. The House Committee Report explained the necessity of this amendment as based on crypto gambling practices that were beyond the original slot machine act because the payoffs were indirect. It mentioned two commonly observed practices of the day to illustrate what it meant by indirect payoffs. These were the knockoff circuit/cancellation recorder and the extra consideration given to alter the odds of the game. Those looking for a simple answer to a complex question often grasp at the mention of these two features in the Committee Report as the righteous bedrock of their conviction that game devices with these features are always contraband. In doing so they conveniently disregard the context of the Committee Report. Mention of the features was also an illustration of the need to broaden the scope of the original slot machine act and there was no hint of any intention that the law was intended to prohibit certain features.

> **"*There are only 12 federal cases that have read prohibited features into the Johnson Act, and eight of those 12 started and ended in the trial courts.*"**

But that's all right. Legal fundamentalists have never been known for their respect of context. Their disregard of context in their reading of the sparse guidance provided over the years by a few (mostly trial) courts has led them to their third and fourth sins of disingenuousness.

The third sin is that too often, reliance on objective features results in disregard of the way these features have not been considered by the federal courts. According to the courts, the features are indeed not prohibited under law. They are no more than relevant factors. As explained in a 1989 district court opinion: "(The Johnson Act) *does not contain such a talisman whose presence or absence may alone define the status of the device. Rather, (it) commands us to consider all the attributes of a subject machine to determine whether it was designed and manufactured primarily for use in connection with gambling.*

The fourth sin of disingenuousness in the prohibited-features approach, does not incur in every case. However, it was present in the case in which Examiner Dunlap testified. The examiner was testifying concerning a game machine that had been examined and demonstrated in court, not long before. The trial court's findings of fact had been reviewed by the district court of appeal having jurisdiction. Here's what that court said in its opinion:

> *"The court made a factual finding that skill was a significant factor in winning the games on the machine. As we read the record, there is no element of chance which is inherent in the machine. Only when the player does not try to manipulate the machine does the element of chance occur. The testimony of a frequent player showed that the player could learn to successfully manipulate the various buttons to win the game.*

(Three months after it filed the opinion quoted above the same court filed an amended opinion in which it reconsidered the significance of chance elements that arise from a player's complete failure to touch the controls provided for the player's use. I am certain that we have not heard last of this case.)

Without exception, prohibited-feature cases since 1970 have involved games in which chance predominates in play. The presence of a predominance of chance is an indispensable element of a Johnson Act violation. The courts have without exception relied on the list of prohibited features to conclude that the free games awarded by chance are but a subterfuge for a system of unlawful payoffs. The problem is that if the free games are awarded by skill, then it would not be a violation of the Johnson Act to pay them off. Any feature which might facilitate payoffs that are lawful, could not itself be unlawful. Go back to the murder mystery in the manor house. To say that a knockoff switch or power interrupt circuit on a skill game is unlawful would be like saying that the butler did it when nobody died. ▲

"Legal fundamentalists have never been known for their respect of context."

Tom Fricke is a St. Louis-based attorney who specializes in legal issues relating to the amusement game business. He serves as chairman of the IAFEC government relations committee and can be reached at (314)361-6672.

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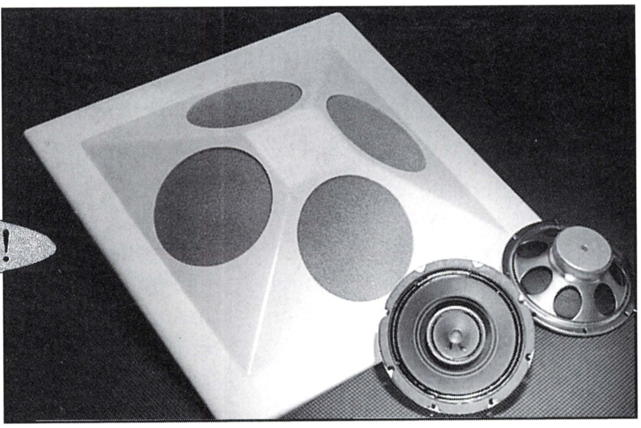

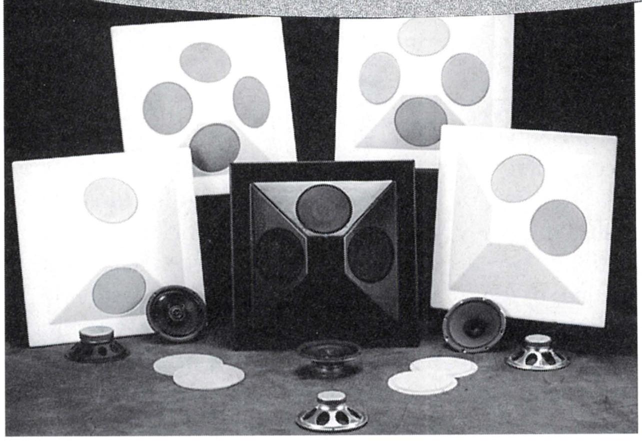

GAME
ROOM

Back to BASICS 1

“Common courtesy is not so common as it should be, and that kind of behavior gets noticed.”

In this time of increased competition, rising prices for equipment, and challenges to the traditional ways to run a business, the basics of managing a game room or the game area of a park or family entertainment center remain the same. An ever-changing mix of perfectly working equipment and great prizes, with staff that is both willing and interested in helping customers, is the formula for success.

Customer service and cleanliness, both functioning at a high level of quality through constant training, are the first keys of operating a successful facility. And both can be improved almost immediately. The elements of equipment rotation, selection and purchasing, equipment servicing, and preventative maintenance, as well as prize selection and redemption operations will be addressed in future columns.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

Customer service tasks include greetings and courtesies, making change, receiving and handling tickets at the redemption center, handling refunds and complaints, answering questions and giving directions, and expressing gratitude to guests. To accomplish these and other tasks that come up in the daily operation of a game room, constant training is necessary.

Either through a formal or informal training program, each task must be broken down into its component parts, and each staff member given an opportunity to learn and master the parts. The parts are then combined and the task is practiced as a whole. Role-playing is helpful in this stage of training. Encourage role-playing in the slow periods during the week to sharpen skills.

Greeting guests with a simple “hello” goes a long way in creating the kind of friendly environment that is needed in operating a facility. In the same way, a “thank you” tells guests that their business has been appreciated. Common courtesy is not so common as it should be, and that kind of behavior gets noticed.

In all customer service issues, the concern for the safety of the guests must be paramount. Any potential safety issues must be handled immediately, and proper notification made to senior management or ownership as soon as possible.

Making change, ticket handling, and other routine tasks around the game room should be performed according to established policies. These policies help create a consistency of service which is important so that as many guests as possible are treated fairly. In the operation of a game room or any other business, exceptions are always made to these policies, according to the severity or fault of any guest complaint.

After the immediate concern of safety, courtesy toward the guests is the next priority. In many situations in the game room, the guest has a complaint that must be addressed. Lost coins, lost tickets, tickets that were not dispensed, or damaged prizes (real or imagined)—these issues should be handled with courtesy.

The guest must be satisfied. That is the best policy. It takes a lot of fortitude to follow this course. Many guests are wrong or misguided in their complaints. Regardless guests must be satisfied for them to recommend or return to an establishment. (Don’t worry; it is estimated that only two percent of guests are really trying to rip off an establishment.)

Try to satisfy the guest as soon as possible. This demands that the staff can make decisions on their own, or that a thorough and complete policy is in effect, and that all members of the staff are familiar with it. Remember to reward the staff when problems are solved in the correct manner. This will encourage other staff members to follow the same example and repeat the behavior.

CLEANLINESS

All areas of a game room must be kept clean at all times. The facility’s quality is judged in the first few seconds after a guest has arrived. Clean parking lots, floors, machine tops and fronts, as well as bathrooms, counter tops, prize shelves, and offices, make great impressions on guests.

These areas easily can be kept clean if a supply of cleaning materials is kept on hand, and if all the staff members looked on this as a shared job responsibility. If senior management sets the example by cleaning along with the staff members, junior staff members will join in quicker and will be more prone to accomplish these tasks on their own. Constant inspection will assure a high level of cleanliness in a facility. Showing the staff what is required will allow them to inspect their own work and will help maintain this level of quality.

Start with an evaluation of the facility; does the staff accomplish these goals? If not, try implementing these suggestions. These proven success strategies will work in a game room or game area, and will result in improved guest relations and repeat business. ▲

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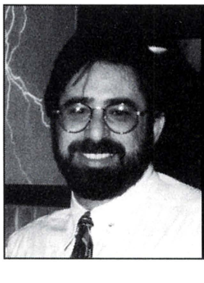
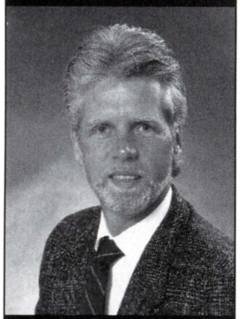


Michael Getlan is a third-generation owner/operator of arcades and family entertainment centers and a member of IAAPA’s Education, Technology, and Award Committees. He is director of operations for Amusement Consultants Ltd. of New Rochelle, N.Y., operating 40 locations in 12 U.S. states and Central America, and is a frequent speaker at industry conventions.

REDEMPTION
REPORT



STEVE
MCCAUL

Q: Is there a magic formula for redemption OPERATIONS?

A: There still seems to be plenty of confusion regarding redemption formulas, ticket pricing, ticket payouts, token value, and perceived product value.

Recently I have been visiting locations where I've found that product is being priced with no rhyme or reason. It is either being priced so high that customers could never obtain the point level being placed on that product, or the product is given away with very little or no value placed on it. Also, the redemption counter employees are spending too much time on low-end product which takes up too much of the employer's time and money.

I want to share a basic formula for marking your product (which has been in place for years) that should render your redemption business successful. This is the formula:

COST OF GOODS

Product Cost (wholesale) plus 15 percent for shipping and handling = Point Value placed on product.

FORMULA COMPONENTS

- Average tickets to be paid out—eight per coin dropped into each game
- Coin Value = 25 cents
- Tickets valued at one cent

EXAMPLE:

Item Cost = $2 plus 15 percent shipping and handling = Point Value placed on the product you purchased. The point value is 230 ($2.30).

In order to know how much the customer is going to pay for that item marked 230 tickets, consider this: as we said earlier, the average ticket payout is eight tickets per coin played. Take 230 (ticket value assigned to the product) and divide that number by eight (tickets per coin) = 28 (amount of coins in the cash box) = 28 x 25 cents = $7. Your customers will drop $7 into your cash box for every item you have marked 230 tickets. Your cost on that item is $2.30. On every item a customer has redeemed, you have a profit of $4.70 or 305 percent return!

With the above scenario, if your product is Beenie Babies or a current hot electronic gadget, you can do the math and change the numbers accordingly. Sometimes one or two hot items can make your redemption counter very profitable. However, a successful counter must have many appealing items and extra attention must be put into the display, as I have mentioned in past articles.

The goal is happy customers. Follow the formula and both operators and customers will be satisfied.

The above basic redemption formula has not changed in years. However, variations can affect the way your product is marked or valued. In explaining some of these variations, I will try not to confuse the basic formula that should be used.

Remember, to use this formula correctly, you must know your Coin Value. Is it 25 cents, or are you on token play and giving away tokens for promotions or birthday parties?

Some FEC's token values are only 22 cents, or even as low as 18 cents (depending on the amount of promotion tokens given out). Adjustments must be made for this which will directly affect the profit shown in the redemption formula.

In order to keep your profit margin the same you must go up accordingly in the point value placed on the product. You must maintain the profit which has been set by the formula.

For example, a competitor's location could have its product marked up double. What you don't know is that maybe they are giving double the ticket award. They could be giving 16 tickets on average per coin (the above example only shows eight). The product has to be marked up accordingly.

As you can see, the formula has not changed and the same profit is being maintained, but the values have been changed. If you make any changes with token giveaways or you decide to give out more tickets, adjustments have to be made to maintain your profit margin.

Perceived Value is the value a customer presumes a product is worth. It plays a very important part in the value you place on your product.

When you look to purchase a product, use the above formula and calculate what you think your customer is willing to pay for that item. If the product is going to be perceived as too expensive, then you have to make adjustments. By using the formula, you know what your return is going to be.

HERE IS ANOTHER EXAMPLE:

Item Cost (wholesale) = $35 (plus 15 percent handling brings your cost up to $40.25). In using the above formula, the ticket value placed on your item is 4,025 tickets ($40.25). If you divide that ticket value (4,025) by eight tickets per coin = 503 x 25 cents (Coin Value) = $125.75. Your customer will have spent $125.75 for the item that actually cost you a total of $40.25!

There is a lot of room to mark this item down and your customer will perceive a better value. In that way, you will move more items and make more money due to the volume of items redeemed.

The kids won't figure out how much the item cost them, but you can bet their parents will quickly figure it out. The whole idea is to keep your customers happy. You want your customers leaving your location feeling they got their money's worth. Then they will continue to visit your location, returning again and again.

You can mark up your low-end product many times because your customer really has no idea of the actual cost. As long as it is perceived as a bargain, or priced reasonably, they will play your games over and over. The major mistake is that redemption operators get too greedy and mark up their prizes thinking they will make fantastic profits.

In reality, they are driving their customers away. Those customers will tell 30 other customers what a rip-off your location is. You wake up months later asking, "Where did my customers go? I was doing so well!"

Redemption is a continuous balancing act. It can be very profitable if done at a slow, steady pace. You will have this business for many years.

To recap, if you stick to the formula, understand token value, perceived value, average ticket payout, and product cost, you will be successful. Always look at your product the way your customer perceives it. We are in the entertainment business and the retail business at the same time. As always, we have to keep our customers happy. A satisfied customer will return frequently and bring a friend. ▲

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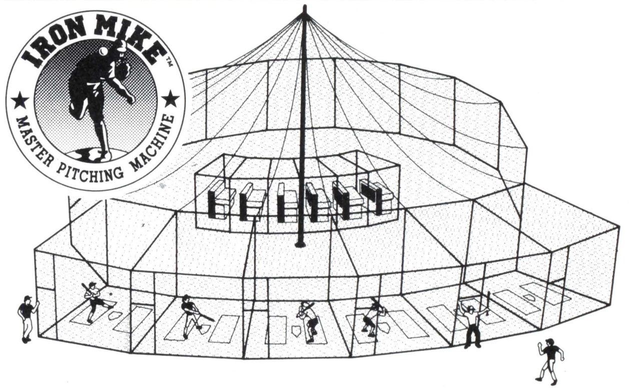

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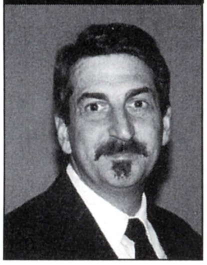


Sencore blows away CRT failures with CR7000 and how CRTs fail

A Play Meter Monthly Exclusive

RANDY FROMM

I got the call again today. It comes about once a week now. It goes something like this:

"I can't adjust the color on this monitor. It looks real dim. If I try to turn up the pots on the neck board, the picture just smears to the right. If I try to turn up the brightness on the remote adjustments board, the picture smears to the right. If I try to turn up the contrast, the picture smears to the right. I have the screen pot turned up as high as it can go without seeing raster and vertical retrace lines washing over the whole screen."

Then, as if a sudden revelation has come over the caller, he perks up and queries "Hey! Could it be a bad picture tube?"

The answer, of course, is yes. To verify, I ask the age of the CRT. After three or more years in operation, many CRTs begin to fail. With so many CRTs in the world today, the ability to test and repair (yes, repair!) CRTs can be pretty darned handy. Testing and repairing CRTs will save you time and money.

But how can you fix a bad picture tube and what the heck fails, anyway? Those are good questions! As video games get converted and reconverted, the monitors can easily log tens of thousands of hours of operation. As a result, picture tube or CRT (cathode ray tube) failure has become increasingly more common.

Anyway, the answer to the question is yes. Sometimes, kinda, sorta. Maybe. But before we get into repairing picture tubes, let's take a look at some different types of picture tube failures. More specifically, we're going to look at the electron gun assembly that's located in the neck of the picture tube.

Each of the three electron guns in the electron gun assembly uses a heated cathode as a source of electrons. The heater is the element that you see glowing when you look at the neck of a picture tube. The heater must fit closely inside the metal cathode but it must not touch it. If the heater shorts to the cathode, the gun will be stuck ON and the screen will appear a super bright color (red, green, or blue depending on which of the three guns is affected) with vertical retrace lines visible throughout the screen. Vertical retrace lines appear as diagonal lines that run from lower left to upper right across the screen.

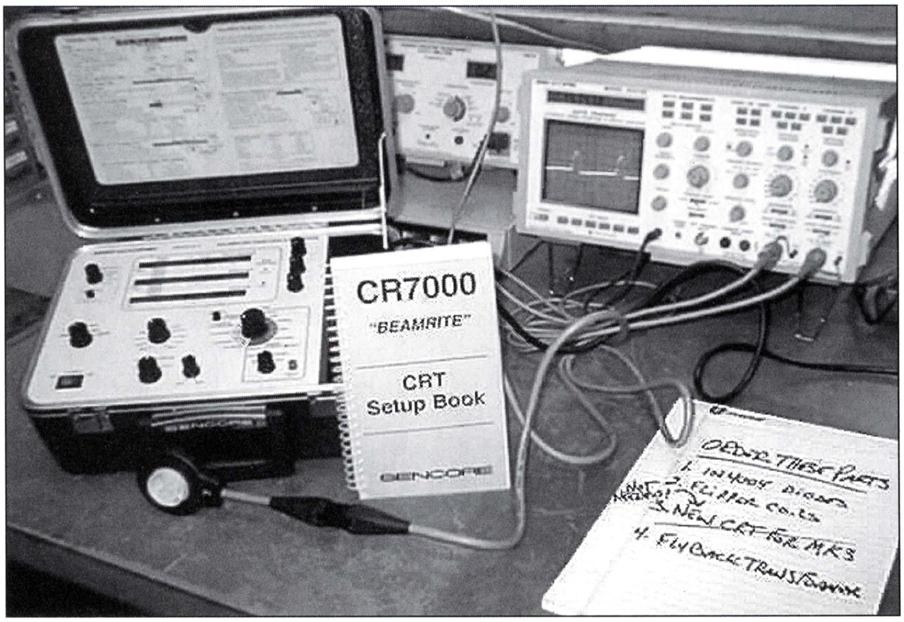
If you believe you might have a heater-to-cathode short, try unsoldering and removing the associated video output transistor from the neck board of the monitor. Fire up the monitor with the transistor removed. If you still have a brightly colored screen with vertical retrace lines, there's a good chance the CRT has a heater-to-cathode short.

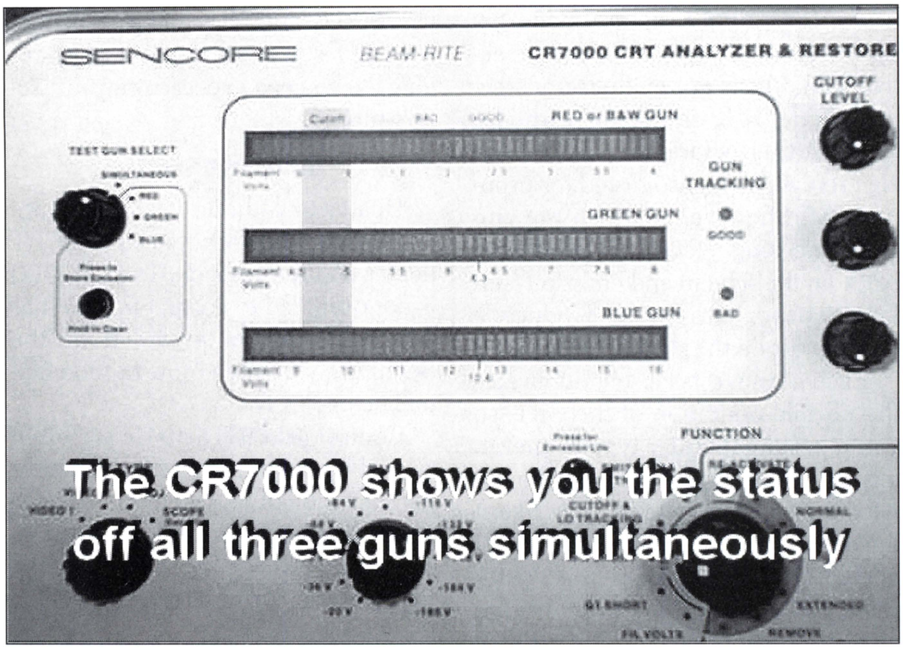
You should be able to verify this with an ohmmeter. With the neck board removed from the CRT, you should have an infinite resistance between heater and cathode of the picture tube.

Although there are many different types of CRTs, you will often find the red cathode at pin 8, the green cathode at pin 6 and the blue cathode at pin 11. Pins 9 and 10 are for the heater.

It is also possible that one of the cathodes might become shorted to the control grid. This can cause a similar symptom as a heater-to-cathode short. If the cathode is shorted to the control grid, you should be able to verify it with your meter. The control grid will often be found at pin 5.

If the cathode has become damaged due to a buildup of oxides and other crud, you will experience a loss of one color (partial or total). Try grounding the collector of the associated video output transistor. If the color comes on clear and bright (a brightly colored





The CR7000 shows you the status off all three guns simultaneously

screen with vertical retrace lines) the CRT is OK. If the color does not come on or it is not as bright as the other two colors, the picture tube is bad.

Another type of electron gun failure is a short between the control grid and the screen grid. This will cause an extremely dark picture (even with the screen control at maximum) or no picture at all. Measure the voltage at the screen grid (often pin 7) of the CRT. You should be able to run it through a range of 250 to 750 volts DC using the screen potentiometer. If the voltage is not high enough, pull the neck board off the CRT and measure the voltage at the CRT socket again. If the voltage is now normal, you probably have a short between the control grid and the screen grid. Use your ohmmeter to verify.

Fixing bad tubes

Is it really possible to fix a bad CRT? I have had a fair bit of success using some simple techniques. Shorted electron guns are often caused by small flakes of cathode material that have sloughed off and found their way into the electron gun. This type of failure is common in games with face-up mounted monitors (table games, gun games that use mirrors, etc.) because any crud in the CRT will naturally fall right into the electron gun. By turning the picture tube face down and tapping lightly and repeatedly on the neck with the plastic handle of a screwdriver, the flakes can sometimes be dislodged.

Do not hit the convergence ring assembly and for goodness sake don't hit the glass neck hard enough to break it! Naturally if you manage to shake the shorting particle out of the neck of the CRT, you do not want to use this picture tube for a table game again, EVER!

There is another trick that you can use to save a shorted CRT. Commercial CRT service equipment uses a technique known as "rejuvenation" to remove shorts from electron guns. The rejuvenating circuit uses a capacitive discharge to blow away any little shorting particle. We'll look at the CRT rejuvenator later but here's a cheap and dirty way to repair some shorted CRTs using just a clip lead or small piece of wire.

CAUTION: The procedures described herein involve potentially lethal voltages and must be performed by qualified personnel or at the very least by a mechanic with a decent sense of self-preservation.

1. Remove the video output transistor associated with the bad color. If in doubt, remove all three video output transistors. I usually remove all three just to be sure.
2. Locate the screen voltage pin of the CRT socket (often pin 7 but check schematic to be sure.) This pin is often labeled G2.
3. With the neck board installed on the CRT (without the video output transistors installed) turn on the monitor and adjust the screen potentiometer fully clockwise in order to obtain maximum screen voltage.
4. Touch one end of a wire or clip lead to the screen voltage pin of the CRT socket.
5. Momentarily touch the other end of the wire to the shorted cathode pin (red, green, or blue) of the picture tube. With luck, you will see a small blue arc in the neck of the CRT as the short is blown away.
6. Use your digital multimeter to verify that the short is gone. You should now read an infinite resistance. If not, repeat steps one through six.

Cathode-to-grid shorts and grid to grid shorts can often be removed with this technique. Heater-to-cathode shorts are another story as the thin filament of the heater can blow out before the short circuit does. I have had about 25 percent success removing heater to cathode shorts this way.

The right way to test and restore CRTs

Now let's look at the correct way to test and restore CRTs using a remarkable piece of test equipment, the CR7000 BeamRite CRT Analyzer and Restorer. Before I begin to describe what the BeamRite does and how it works, let me say that I have repaired and restored dozens of bad video game picture tubes using the predecessor to the CR7000, the CR70. I have taken old CRTs that were dim and virtually unusable and turned them into beautiful, bright displays that look as good as the day they were manufactured. In the process, I have saved operators and Arcade School students hundreds of dollars in CRT replacement costs. I saved $400 just by restoring one high resolution CRT!

What is it?

First of all. Sencore's CR7000 BeamRite will test all types of picture tubes. Individual tests are made for short circuits in each of the three electron guns. Tests are made for heater-to-cathode (H-K) shorts and cathode-to-grid (G1) shorts as well. The electron guns are also tested for proper cutoff (the level at which the gun stops emitting electrons, producing black on the screen) and emission (sufficient beam current to produce a bright color on the screen).

Each of the tests closely duplicates the normal operation of the CRT, so you're testing it under typical operating conditions. By the way, you do not need the entire monitor in order to test the picture tube. The CR7000 will test any CRT as a stand-alone unit. Naturally, you do not need to remove the picture tube from the monitor to test it. You simply remove the CRT socket (the neck board) from the monitor in order to connect the picture tube to the BeamRite. The CR7000 comes with adapter sockets for testing all types of picture tubes. Notice I didn't say most picture tubes or all popular tubes. The BeamRite tests 'em all!

Another test checks the tracking of the three color guns. In order to produce a picture that is properly color balanced, all three electron guns have to be alike. The emission levels of all three guns are compared by the CR7000. which measures the ratio between the strongest and weakest gun. If the difference is more than 55 percent. the gun will show as bad. Don't worry! Bad guns can be restored by the BeamRite as we'll see later. The CR7000 BeamRite even has a life test. The life test will tell you how much usable life you can expect from your picture tube.

Removing shorts

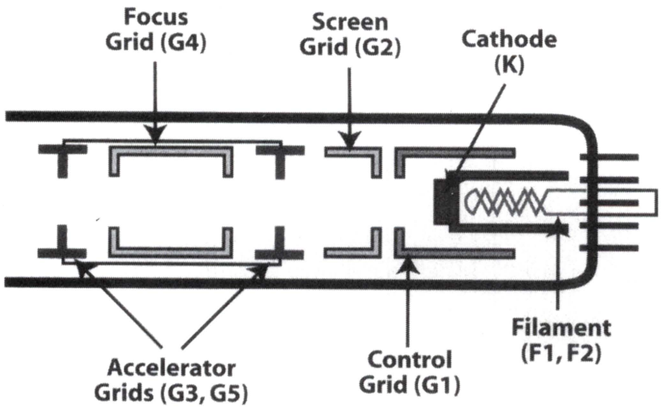
Heater-to-cathode shorts are caused by contact between the CRT heater and the cathode. The CR7000 is not designed to correct this fault as the surge current provided by the BeamRite will often blow out the filament completely.

Control grid (G1) shorts are often caused by flakes of material that have become lodged between the cathode and the control grid. A G1 short can cause loss of control of the CRT beam, resulting in a bright screen with visible retrace lines.

G1 shorts also result in CRTs that cannot be controlled by the brightness control or the incoming video or blanking signals. The CR7000 REMOVE G1 SHORT function will vaporize most shorting particles, resulting in normal CRT operation.

Cutoff related failures

In order to understand the cutoff test, let's take a closer look at the way the cathode works. The cathode is the source of the electron beam. It is coated with a material (such as barium or thorium) which gives off large numbers of electrons when it is heated by a filament. Believe it or not, there is a finite amount of this electron emitting material and it gets used up or stripped after years of extended use. Once the barium is used up, the picture tube cannot be completely restored.



The electron gun is the source of most CRT failures

The hot cathode emits electrons which form a cloud around the cathode until they're attracted toward the front of the screen by a positive voltage on the screen grid of the electron gun assembly. Between the cathode and the screen grid lies the control grid. In most video game monitors, the control grid is grounded, giving the control grid a negative bias with respect to the cathode. The video signal modulates (changes) the voltage of the cathode. It is the voltage difference between the cathode and the control grid that controls the beam current and the brightness of the color.

The entire surface of the cathode is not always used to supply the electrons that make up the electron beam. When the electron gun is only partially turned on, just the center part of the cathode is used. This means that the emitting material at the center of the cathode is used up faster than the material at the edges. The outer areas only supply electrons during peak brightness periods. When the center part becomes worn, the CRT screen still lights brightly during peak brightness but the beam cuts off too soon because the brightness drops and the worn-out center of the cathode is the only part being used. This results in a picture that's a combination of overdriven, smearing color and black, with no intermediate shades of color. Many technicians call this a gassy tube. Actually, the tube is exhibiting poor gamma; the ability to correctly reproduce shades of gray or color.

The CR7000 tests for proper cutoff. The cutoff test, combined with the emission test that follows, indicate the next steps to be taken in the restoration process.

Emission test

The emission test indicates if the edges of the cathode are poisoned. Poisoning occurs when positive ions coat the emitting material on the cathode. The ions are a result of a minute amount of air that's left inside the CRT during manufacturing. These ions react with the hot cathode surface over a period of time and reduce (in some cases completely shut off) the number

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Randy Fromm's Arcade School 1944 Falmouth Dr. El Cajon, CA 92020-2827 TEL 619.593.6131 FAX 619.593.6132 of electrons emitted by the CRT. Cathode poisoning is similar to rust on a piece of steel.

If the tube fails both the emission test and the cutoff test, the entire surface is poisoned or stripped of emitting material. An emission life test reduces the filament voltage to detect cathodes that are overly temperature dependent, indicating short life expectancy.

CRT Rejuvenation and restoration

The CR7000 uses a number of different methods to fix picture tubes. The method used varies from tube to tube, depending on the nature of the CRT failure. The BeamRite uses a progressive restoration technique that allows you to carry out CRT restoration one step at a time, using just the right combination of voltage, current, and heater voltage to get the job done while avoiding the tendency to overdo it that many technicians have when restoring a CRT. The process of restoring a CRT is often referred to as shooting the tube.

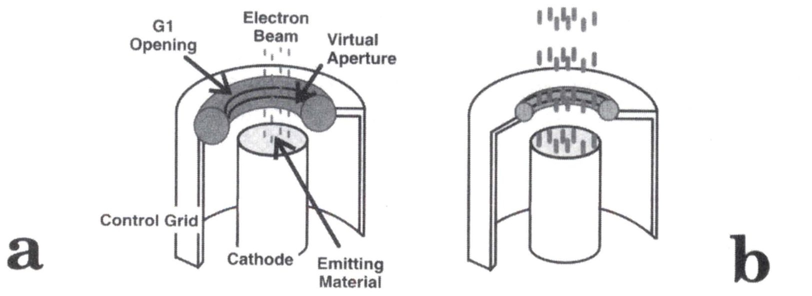
After removing any shorts and testing each gun for cutoff and emission, you're ready to try restoring any weak guns. The CR7000 does this by boosting the CRT heater voltage. This makes the cathode super hot. Then, a 40 to 100 milliamp current is passed through the cathode. The combination of high temperature and high cathode current removes the cathode poisoning, exposing fresh cathode material.

Restoration

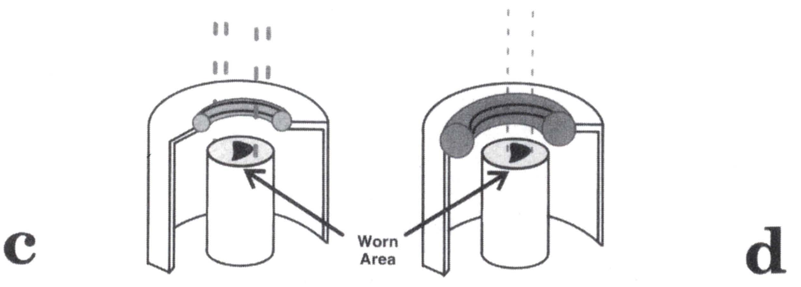
The CR7000 BeamRite offers four automatic CRT Restore functions to return near normal performance to the CRT cathode. The four functions are progressive levels of current and current durations including Low, Normal, High, and Extended. Progressive restoration allows you to use only what the gun needs to restore its operation.

Re-activate 30 sec. (1 mA)
Low - 2 sec. (40 mA)
Normal - 2 cycles (80 mA)
High - 3 cycles (100 mA)
Extended - 15 sec. (100 mA)
Re-activate

The CR7000 Re-activate function safely activates the existing cathode emitting material with little or no threat to the CRT gun. Re-activation also works well on some CRT guns that have aged causing minor cathode contamination or poisoning. You can use the Re-activate function repeatedly with little threat of damaging the CRT cathode.



Only a small portion of the cathode emits electrons when high G1 Bias closes the virtual aperture (a). Reducing the bias results in more beam current because more of the cathode's surface emits electrons. (b)



Bad Cathode / High Bias

Bad Cathode / Low Bias

continued - A CRT with a worn cathode center area (c) still produces good light output at low bias, but cuts off far too soon at higher biases (d).

The Low Restore function uses a brief two second current, limited to 40 mA, to heal the contaminated cathode surface. The Low Restore function uses a much lower current and shorter current duration than offered by any other CRT tester On many weak cathodes, this is enough to be effective while eliminating the cathode damage that would result from other testers and higher levels of restore currents.

The Normal Restore function offers additional restore current, limited to 80 mA, and two automatic cycles lasting three seconds each. The higher current and duration removes the contamination more aggressively from the cathode while permitting a three second pause between current cycles. The High Restore functions boost the filament voltage to superheat the cathode while increasing the maximum current to 100 mA. The High Restore function is effective in removing thicker cathode contamination. For tougher cathode contamination, the Extended Function draws continuous restore current up to 15 seconds.

This has worked like a charm every time I've used it.

If you cannot get any cathode current to flow due to complete poisoning of the cathode, the CR7000 has a rejuvenate function. The rejuvenate function is used when the CRT cathode is so totally encrusted that no restore current can be drawn by any of the other restore functions. In the rejuvenate function, a charged capacitor is connected between the cathode and the control grid (G1). When the sudden positive voltage from the capacitor is applied to G1, the electrons under the poison crust break free, essentially cracking the layer of contamination. Once the layer of contamination has been cracked, the other restore functions can be used successfully.

Other CRT Gun Problems and Tests G1 & H-K Short Tests

When testing a color CRT gun, the G1 Short and H-K Short tests are performed simultaneously on the red, green, and blue electron guns. The three-bar graph display indicates the resistance of the respective guns simultaneously. You know at a glance if any of the color guns has an inter-element short.

G1 Shorts Test: These common shorts are automatically tested with the CR7000, and the display shows which elements have the short. In the Remove G1 Short function, the cathode (K) and G2 grids are connected together. The filament voltage is removed to cool the cathode and prevent filament or cathode damage. After a delay, pressing the Press To Restore button discharges a 350 volt capacitor through the short path between the G1 and the K/G2 connection.

Cutoff Test: The CR7000 simulates cutoff bias conditions relating to the manufacturer's specified range and circuit bias conditions.

Lo Tracking: The Lo Tracking test compares the level of G2 voltage needed by each gun to produce cutoff current. It is automatically performed while testing cutoff of all three guns of a color CRT. The good GUN TRACKING LED lights when all three guns are conducting within the Cutoff area of the display and the G2 voltages are within a ratio of 1.25:1.

Emission Test: First, the CR7000 measures true beam current or the current passing from the cathode through the opening in G1 and on to G2. This provides the best representation of the actual CRT beam current that strikes the phosphor screen. A second and exclusive feature of the CR7000 is a sliding good/bad scale for testing emission to manufacturer specifications.

The CR7000's Emission Life Test cools the cathodes slightly by decreasing the filament voltage by 25 percent. A cooled cathode produces less emission, but most good cathodes are capable of producing more current than is needed for full beam current (white picture level).

Hi Tracking: The CR7000's Hi Tracking test compares the peak emission levels of each gun of the color CRT. The Hi Tracking test automatically calculates the tracking ratio as it simultaneously displays the emission readings for all three guns. The good GUN TRACKING LED lights when all three guns have emission currents resulting in a ratio within 1.55:1.

Free video tape and technical newsletter

A very informative video tape on CRT failures is available from Sencore. Ask for Tech Tape #861A. The tape is free. Sencore's toll-free number is (800)SENCORE. The address is 3200 Sencore Drive, Sioux Falls, SD 57107. They have a Web site (http://www.sencore.com). Ask to be put on their mailing list and you'll receive a free subscription to Sencore's technical newsletter on troubleshooting monitors and VCRs. Please tell them Randy Fromm at Play Meter Magazine recommended you call. ▲

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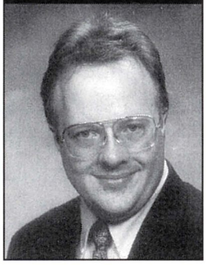


Bucking
the game sound trend

It amazes me how many people are set in their old-fashioned ways, not wanting to change. Their mind-set tells them, if it works, why change it? Well, I have news for them, change is inevitable. Failure to change could mean lost customers and lower profits in your game center.

What worked 10 years ago, last year, or even yesterday may not work now. Case in point: The attract mode sound and just how loud your games are. Ten years ago it was great to turn up the sound on your games–the louder the better! The reasoning was that having the attract mode sound turned on and up attracted players to the games. While I'm not doubting that, I do have a problem with the fact that street operators coming into a family fun center are trying their "techniques" in a totally different environment.

Let me compare environments in a street location, say a convenience store, and an FEC. A convenience store may have two to five games; an FEC probably has as many as 100. The convenience store customers are coming and going. They get what they need, spending about five minutes in the location. In an FEC a family comes and stays for an average of two to three hours.

If I had a convenience store route, I would certainly crank up the attract mode sound to attract players to my games. After all, I've only got those five short minutes to do it. But in an FEC your customers are already there ready to play your games. That is IF they are working...but that's a whole article by itself. In an FEC there is a broad range of people exposed to your games. Moms, dads, and grandparents know what is desirable and what is not. They know when loud is way too loud, whereas younger children are simply overwhelmed with all the flashing lights and graphics.

> What worked 10 years ago, last year, or even yesterday may not work now.

Remember the old adage: "You can attract more bees with honey than you can with vinegar." That could very well apply here. Parents know that if something is not acceptable, they will think twice about doing it again, especially with their kids. Parents have a lot of influence on visits to FECs. If the game play and the attract mode sounds are turned up to maximum, it's just too loud (bordering on deafening) on a busy Saturday night. And that is unacceptable.

If I planned a visit to an FEC with my family and the games were as loud as they are in some convenience stores, I would seriously limit my stay. Not only would I be worrying about my family's hearing, I'd just want to get out of there before I got a headache. Your customers will feel no different; you can only tolerate loud sounds for a limited time.

If you think this is foolish, do a quick survey in your FEC on a busy Saturday. Ask a few parents whether they think it's too noisy. I would be willing to bet you'll get more yes replies than no. Turn off the attract modes, turn down the louder games, and you'll make your FEC a nice place to visit. When kids are begging to go to your FEC, parents won't be telling them, "Sorry, the family fun center is too noisy, we can't go!"

If you want to get scientific and test my theory, purchase a sound meter at Radio Shack and test your place on a busy day. For a frame of reference, a 747 airplane passing overhead at 1,000 feet creates about 70 to 90 decibels of sound for about five seconds. An 8,000-square-foot game center with 75 games with the attract mode volumes on high produces about 85 decibels of sound. Prolonged loud sounds are what causes hearing damage. Combine that information with the average stay in an FEC and you'll see that there is a real chance for hearing damage for both your customers and your staff ! Turn the sound down, make everyone happy. Your customers will thank you by making more frequent visits. ▲

"Ticket Vic" Fortenbach

If you wish to comment on this article, or if you have a question I can answer, I can be reached at my Web site (http://members.aol.com/ticketvic) or at VICCO electronics (760) 322-4000.

SPORTING
EDGE

OCMA holds annual team dart tournament

The Ohio Coin Machine Associations' 6th Annual Team Dart State Tournament was held earlier this year at the Canton Memorial Civic Center in Canton, Ohio. Over 500 darters competed for over $12,000 in prizes and trophies. OCMA expressed thanks to all darters, officials, manufacturers, distributors, and operators who made the 1997 tournament a success.

Here's a look at the official results:

SINGLES

Men's Masters Division: 1st—Steve Market (Shaffer Services of Columbus); 2nd—Tracy Sheppard (J & S Electronics of St. Mary's); 3rd—Kelly Chapman of Shaffer Services).

Men's A Division: 1st—Jeff Frame (Glass City Darts of Toledo); 2nd—Jeff Lehman (J & S Electonics; 3rd—Scott Berge (Pioneer Services of Cincinnati).

Men's B Division:1st—Rich Perkins (Lorain Music of Mansfield); 2nd—Dave Siefer (Gem Music & Vending of Dayton); 3rd—A. J. Gray (Lorain Music).

Men's C Division: 1st—Mike Taylor (Gem Music of Dayton); 2nd—Don Hauenstein (A. Van Brackel & Sons of Defiance); 3rd—Darrell Jump (Pioneer Services).

Women's Masters Division: 1st—Becky Breckenridge (Shaffer Services); 2nd—Ruth Kenny (Pioneer Services).

Women's A Division: 1st—Joyce Lieska (Pioneer Services); 2nd—Teresa Shaw (Shaffer Services); 3rd—Tara Thompson (A. Van Brackel & Sons).

Women's B Division: 1st—Ollie Vanderveen (Gem Music & Vending); 2nd—Karla Deshayes (Gem Music & Vending); 3rd—Lovely Ware (Gem Music & Vending).

DOUBLES

Men's Masters: 1st—Steve Market and Toby Beets (Shaffer Services); 2nd—Ellery Emswiille and Darren Fourman (Gem Music & Vending); 3rd—Jeff Lehman and Kevin Hole (J & S Electronics).

Men's A Division: 1st—Charles Feeny and Scott Robers (A. Van Brackel & Sons); 2nd—Tristan Pugh and Chuck Slade (Gem Music & Vending); 3rd—Fred Center and Chris Center (Gem Music & Vending).

Men's B Division: 1st—Mike Gilliam and Jerry Hawker (R & Z Vending of Dayton): 2nd—Dave McDorman and Don Haustein (A. Van Brackel & Sons); 3rd—Donald Richards and Lonnie Stroud (W-K Music of Columbus).

Ladies A Division: 1st—Ruth Kenny and Joyce Lieske (Pioneer Services); 2nd—Julie Cooper and Kathy Schafer (Gem Music & Vending).

Ladies B Division: 1st—Teresa Meyer and Karla Deshayes (Gem Music & Vending); 2nd—Ollie Vanderveen and Trisha Meintel (Gem Music & Vending); 3rd—Rachael Pennington and Christina Carmean (Glass City Darts of Toledo).

Mixed A Division: 1st—Kristy Schanke and Gary Keller (Glass City Darts); 2nd—Kathy Schafer and Joe Sphar (Gem Music & Vending); 3rd—Daphne Leach and Darren Fourman.

Mixed B Division: 1st—Jennifer Komorowski and Brian Pawlaczk (Glass City Darts of Toledo); 2nd—Becki Berger and Mark Profit (Gem Music & Vending of Dayton); 3rd—Jennifer Butcher and Denny Dearth (A. Van Brackel & Sons of Defiance).

TEAM EVENTS

Men's Masters: 1st—Pioneer Services; 2nd—Ohio Vending of Elyria; 3rd—Glass City Darts.

Men's A Divsion: 1st—Krusty's Krusaders (Gem Music & Vending); 2nd—Looney Tunes (Glass City Darts); 3rd—Who's Next (Clark Vending of Dayton).

Men's B Division: 1st—Park Lanes #2 (Lorain Music); 2nd—Red Bird (Gem Music & Vending); 3rd—Rockin' Horse (Lorain Music).

Women's A Division: 1st—Pioneer Ladies (Pioneer Services); 2nd—O'Leary's Matcaps (Gem Music & Vending); 3rd—Town Pub (Shaffer Services).

Women's B Division: 1st—Four Skins (Gem Music & Vending); 2nd—Tony's Tricks (Gem Music & Vending); 3rd—Double BLT (A.Van Brackel & Sons). ▲

Krusty's Krusaders took first place in the Men's A Division team competition.

The Pioneer Ladies were the team winners in the Women's A Division.

Ollie Vanderveen (l) and Karla Deshayes were the first and second place winners, respectively, in the Women's B Division singles event.

Ohio pool championship attracts 1,745 players

A total of 1,745 players competed for over $60,000 in prizes and trophies at the16th annual Ohio Coin Machine/Valley National Eight-Ball Association State Pool Championships.

The 16th annual Ohio Coin Machine/Valley National Eight-Ball Association State Pool Championships were held recently at the 3,200-seat Canton Civic Center with 26 OCMA member operators participating in the event.

Four teams were crowned Ohio state champions during the highly competitive three-day event which utilized 64 pool tables. The Open Division was comprised of 281 teams; the Masters Division included 12 teams; the Women's Division saw 59 teams; and the Women's Masters Division was made up of 11 teams. A total of 1,745 players competed for over $60,000 in prizes, trophies, and a chance to compete at the VNEA International Championships in Las Vegas.

Elum Music served as the host sponsor for this year's competition with tournament sponsors including Valley, High Country Promotions, Shaffer Distributing, Anheuser-Busch Sales of Canton, SNAP Promotion, Downing Billiard Supply, the Canton Civic Center, and the Canton/Stark County Convention & Visitors Bureau.

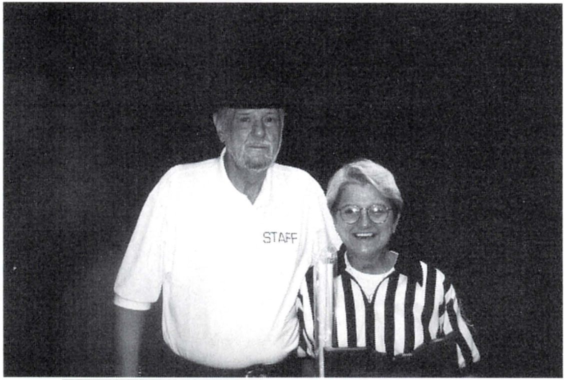
OCMA thanks went out to: pool tournament advisory officers including president Dave Yuhas, first vice president Mike Fowler, second vice president Bev Bazill, and past president Steve Guilford; as well as head statistician Toni Dunbar, head referee Mary Beth Altizer, and OCMA executive director David Corey. Special recognition was given to the 1997 Meritorious Service Award Winner Mary Hageman, who has dedicated over 12 years to the success of the pool championships in Ohio.

Here's a look at the final results:

Open Division: 1st—Sportsman of Shaffer Services; 2nd—7 & Out of Hughes Music; 3rd—Christy Club of Clark Vending.

Women's Division: 1st—Sportz N Spudz #1 of Shaffer Services; 2nd—Winner's Circle #2 of Shaffer Services; 3rd—Quality Cues of Hughes Music.

Masters Division: 1st—On The Snap #1 of Elum Music; 2nd—On The Snap # 2 of Elum Music; 3rd—Trophies #1 of Shaffer Services. ▲



Tournament president Dave Yuhas (l) with Meritorious Service Award Winner Mary Hageman.

The team Sportz N Spudz #1 of Shaffer Services was victorious in the Women's Division.

Shaffer Services' Sportsman also took top honors in the Open Division.

SPORTING
EDGE

Valley Foosball tour stops in Atlanta for MASTERS OPEN

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Valley World Tour

The $45,000 Masters Open, which is patterned after the renowned golf event of the same name, drew over 350 players from across the United States and Canada.

The third of the five major tour stops on the Valley Foosball Tour was held recently at the Atlanta Airport Hilton for the seventh consecutive year. The $45,000 Masters Open, which is patterned after the renowned golf event of the same name, drew over 350 players from across the United States and Canada.

The weekend's main event was the Master's Singles, a single elimination, one-on-one event featuring an all pro player field. Don Swan of Minneapolis, Minn., won this event capturing the 1997 Master's Singles title, the coveted green jacket, the Masters Cup, and the number one seeding in all sanctioned singles events for the remainder of the year. Chicago's Terry Moore also racked up a number of victories—including the Open Singles, Open Doubles, and Open Mixed—and the most valuable player award.

The next stop on the tour, the $40,000 National Championships, was held in Oshkosh, Wis., last month in conjunction with the Valley International Foosball Championships. Stay tuned for coverage. Here's a look at the final results from the Masters:

Open Singles: 1st—Terry Moore of Illinois; 2nd—Don Swan of Minnesota; 3rd—Adrian Zamora of California.

Open Doubles: 1st—Terry Moore and Bob Diaz of Florida; 2nd—Gregg Perrie of California and Todd Loffredo of Washington; 3rd—Tommy Adkisson of Oklahoma and Robert Mares of Colorado.

Women's Singles: 1st—Cindy Head of Alabama; 2nd—Tiffany Moore of Illinois; 3rd—Liz Hill of Oklahoma.

Women's Doubles: 1st—Tracy Hill of Texas and Caryn Varadinek of New York; 2nd—Laurette Gunther of Washington and April Mendel of New York; 3rd—Maggie Dix of Indiana and Dusty Bambenek of Ohio.

Open Mixed: 1st—Pam King and Terry Moore; 2nd—Tracy McMillin and Laurette Gunther; 3rd—Christina Fuchs and Tom Yore. ▲

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Tri-state VNEA event held in South Carolina

In an unprecedented move, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Georgia came together earlier this year to host a Valley National Eight-Ball Association event at Carolina Wings in Irmo, S.C. The event included Team, Mixed Singles, and Scotch Doubles competitions.

Team entries totaled 10, and 55 individual players competed in the Mixed Singles event. Charter holders sending teams included American Amusement, Collins Entertainment, Heritage Amusement Co., Leisure Time Amusement, Rosemary Coin Machine, and S & L Vending.

In the team event, Diamond Mine of Florence, S.C., (Rosemary Coin Machine) took first place over runners up Shag Shooters of Columbia, S.C., (American Amusement) and third place winners the S & L Dream Team of Columbus, Ga., (S & L Vending).

Richie Tuttle from Leisure Time Amusement took top honors in the singles event over Ronnie Banks of Rosemary Coin Machine and Bob Baty of Collins Entertainment. Prize money was given out to players finishing in the top eight.

Tournament director Becki Kilpatrick sent out thanks to local staff as well as the VNEA charter holders who participated including Terry Graham, Mike Young, Linda Byar, Robbie Moller, and Jackie Jordan. ▲

HORNETS
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O'DOUL'S

Diamond Mine, sponsored by Rosemary Coin Machine, took first place in the team competition, (l-r): Terry Graham, Tommy Chavis, Ronnie Banks, Gerald Davis, and J.P. Costas.

Valley Gold tour brings the Harley to Tampa

Valley Recreation Products recently completed its $20,000 Tampa Valley Gold Tour event, the fourth of six stops on the 1997 Valley Gold Tour. The competition took place at the Ramada Airport Hilton.

Darters who compete in any one of the five regional events are vying for a spot in the top 32 positions in the coveted Go For the Gold event, which would have allowed players to win a 1997 Harley-Davidson Sportster at the $150,000 North American Championships, held last month in Minneapolis, Minn.

This was one of the highlighted features of the Tampa event, where players were enticed by the presence of the motorcycle in the tournament room. While the tournament was geared toward each and every dart player in the surrounding Florida region, however, there were two events—Go for the Gold and Team USA—specifically targeted at players that had participated in a Valley operator local qualifying tournament.

Here's a look at the final results:

Go For The Gold: 1st—Kenny Doyle; 2nd—Roger Carter; 3rd—Thom Johnson.

Women's USA: 1st—Theresa Sullivan; 2nd—Jennifer Nadiak; 3rd—Julie Dellmire.

Open Singles: 1st—Nick Kielman; 2nd—Mark Absher; 3rd—Larry Schramm.

Open Doubles: 1st—Roger Carter and Jake Thompson; 2nd—Jerry Driskell and Don Schuller; 3rd—Larry Schramm and Mark Absher.

Mixed Triples: 1st—Jimmy Sullivan, Theresa Sullivan, and Jerry Driskell; 2nd—Paula Murphy, Kenneth Roling, and Steve Doaner; 3rd—Mark Absher, Sherry Absher, and Larry Schramm.

Men's USA: 1st—Roger Carter; 2nd—Hank Kline; 3rd—Jason Naert.

Luck-Of-The-Draw: 1st—Robert Mousseau and Thom Johnson; 2nd—T.J. May and Gary Delone.

Women's Singles: 1st—Theresa Sullivan; 2nd—Kathy Maloney; 3rd—Julie Dellmire.

Women's Doubles: 1st—Kathy Maloney and Hope McEacheron; 2nd—Jennifer Nadiak and Meradith McGee' 3rd—Marie Martin and Sherry Absher. ▲

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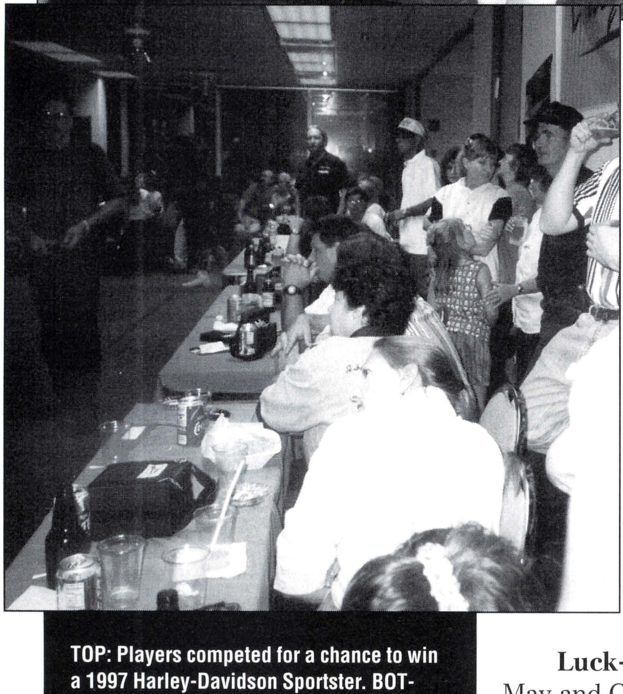
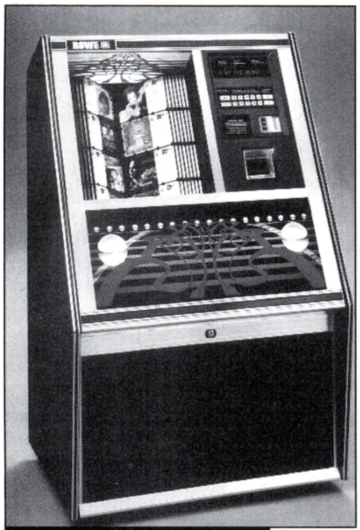
Valley Gold Tour
1997 HARLEY DAVIDSON CUSTOM SPORTSTER
Valley Gold Tour



TOP: Players competed for a chance to win a 1997 Harley-Davidson Sportster. BOTTOM: Valley Recreation Products recently completed its $20,000 Tampa Valley Gold Tour event, the fourth of six stops on the 1997 Valley Gold Tour.

WHAT'S NEW



MM-3

Rowe/AMi introduces its latest version of the MM series jukebox, the *MM-3*, which was unveiled in two striking color combinations, Cheyenne Red and Capri Teal, with a strong futuristic look.

The *MM-3*, which includes many of the standard MM series characteristics, has been designed for smaller locations yet can still display up to 100 album covers.

Features include a Rowe dollar bill acceptor with stacker and up to eight CD covers with title strips displayed at a time. The unit also comes with all the standard attract mode features from Rowe.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Rowe International, 1500 Union Ave. S.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49507; (616)243-3633; fax (616)243-9414.

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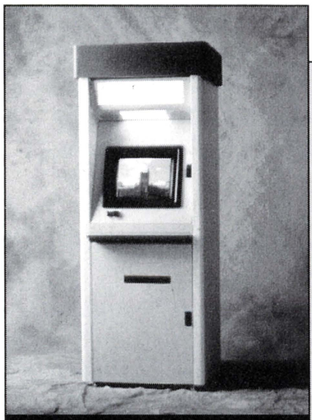
Tekbilt announces the release of *Touch the Gold,* a multigame touch screen video lottery terminal that has 16 games in its main menu including five slot games, four poker games, two keno games, two lotto games, one pull tab game, one bingo game, and one blackjack game.

All games have state-of-the-art graphics, sound, high-tech individual game option settings, and extensive accountability. The game comes in an all-metal casino-style cabinet with a progressive bonus display.

Custom software and configurations, multiple languages, international coin and currency acceptance, hoppers, cashless systems and online systems, and slot and player tracking systems are available.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Tekbilt Inc., 3983 Mann Road, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006; (215)322-3232 or (800)666-7776; fax (215)322-3238.



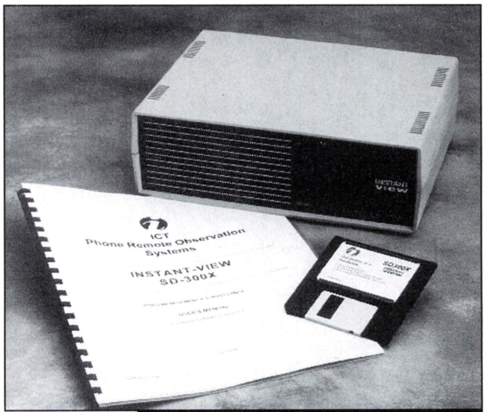
INTEGRA2000

EMF Corp. has launched *Integra2000*, a new generation of fully integrated, interactive off-the-shelf kiosks that supports information and transaction applications for a diverse range of markets.

The unit features an attractive styling, 17" Elo TouchSystems touch-sensitive screen, Pentium computer running Windows 95, CD player, sound card, and speakers. It also meets rigid quality and safety standards including UL, FCC, and ADA.

Options include a credit card reader, modem, network card, laser printer, receipt and voucher printers, barcode reader, video conferencing capabilities, and Windows NT. The unit is designed to meet the needs of a wide variety of kiosk services.

For more information, contact EMF Corp., 15110 N.E.95th St., Redmond, WA 98052-2591; (425)883-0045 or (800)285-3630; fax (425)883-7222; Web site (http:www.emfcorp.com).



REMOTE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

International Security Systems Inc. presents its instant view model SD300X, a new remote management and security system. This transmitter, with free software, converts a remotely located CCTV system through a normal phone line into an affordable video monitoring system.

Easy to install and use, the instant view technology (compatible with DOS and Windows 95) can be activated by motion detection through a regular camera and/or connected to an existing alarm system. It can be remotely activated from anywhere in the world with visual monitoring and two-way audio.

Additional features: the ability to transmit video up to three frames per second and save pictures to a hard drive for printing; simultaneous two-way audio; capacity to monitor up to 192 cameras.

For more information, contact International Protection Security Systems, 12555 West Jefferson Blvd., West Tower, Suite 300, Los Angeles, CA 90066; (310)301-7680; fax (310)301-7635. ▲

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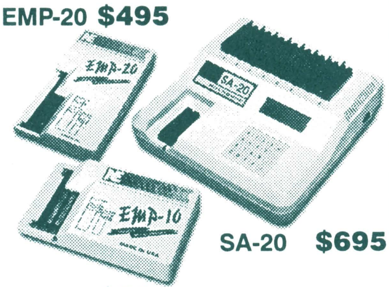

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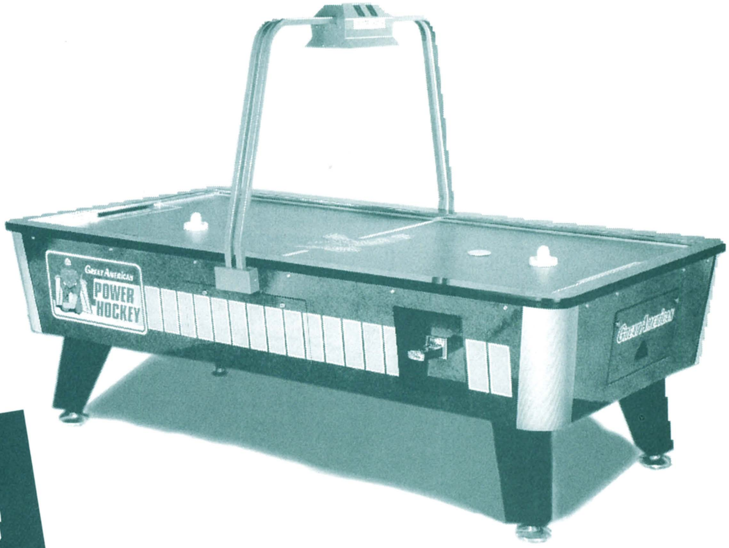
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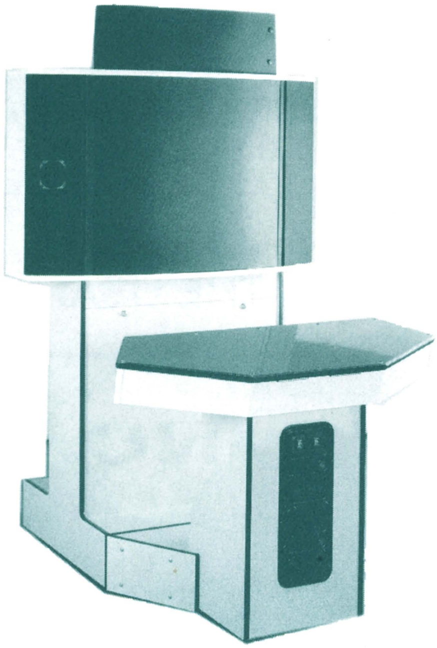

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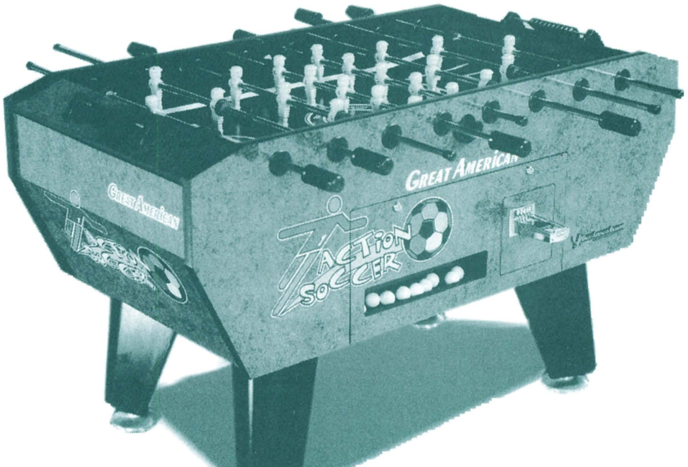
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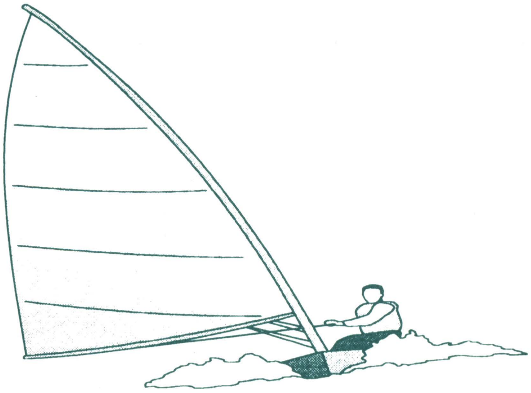

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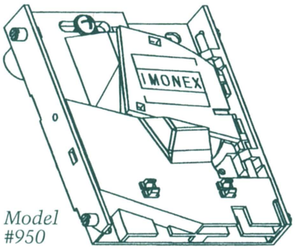

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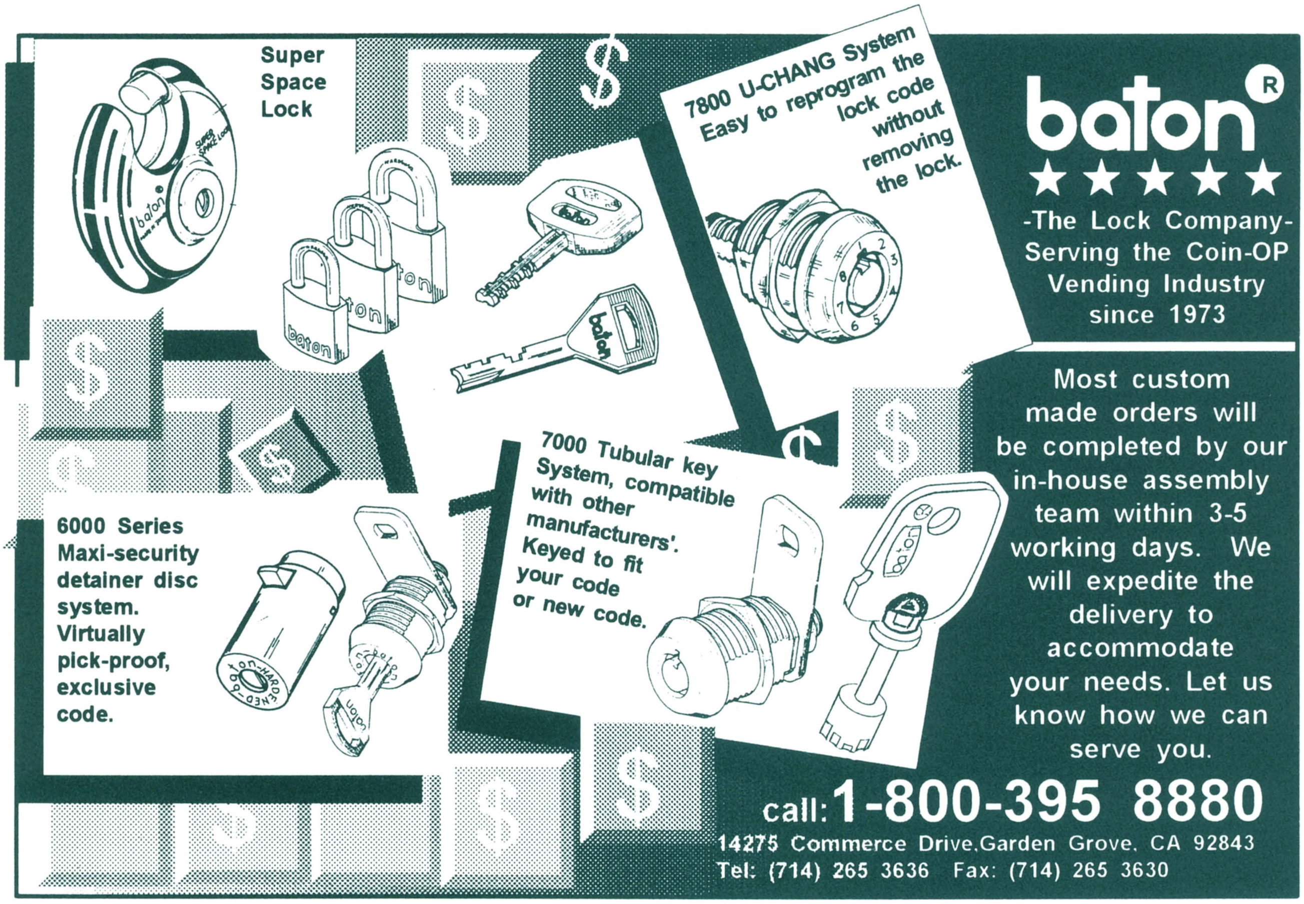

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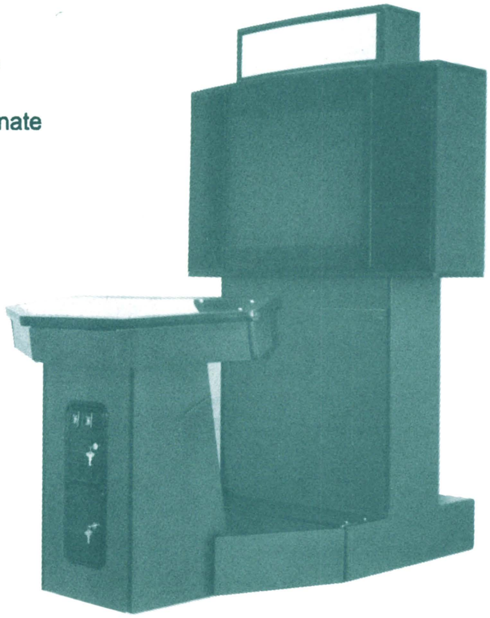

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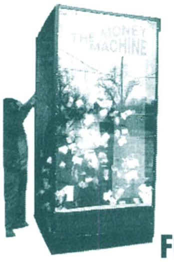

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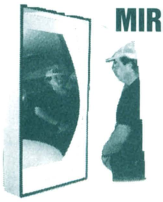

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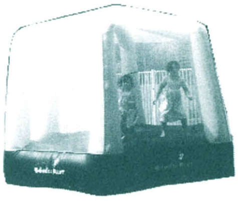

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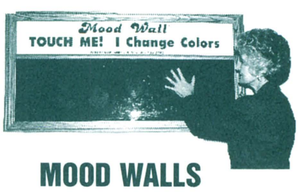

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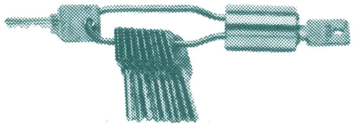

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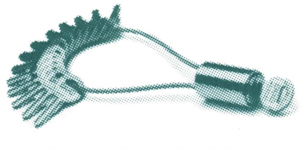

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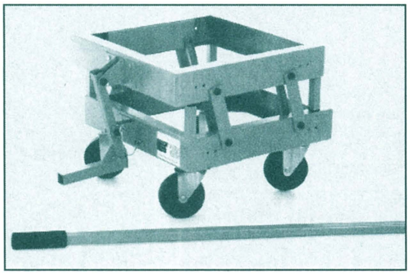

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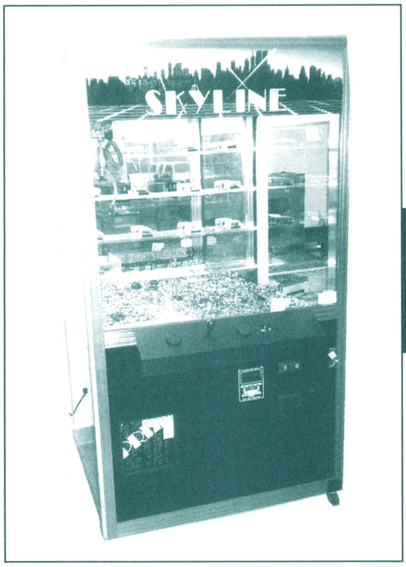

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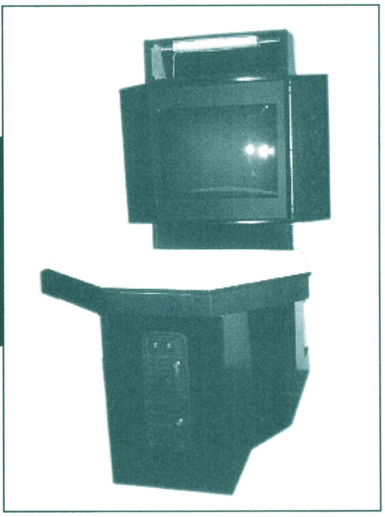

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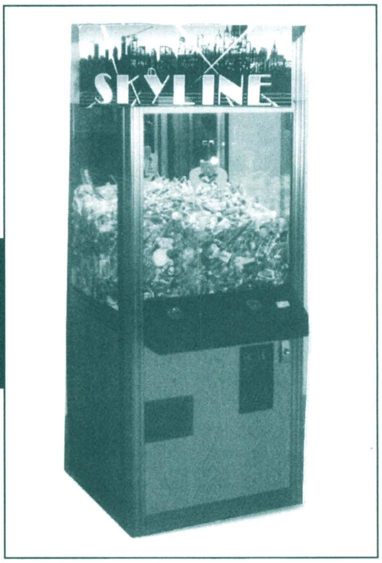

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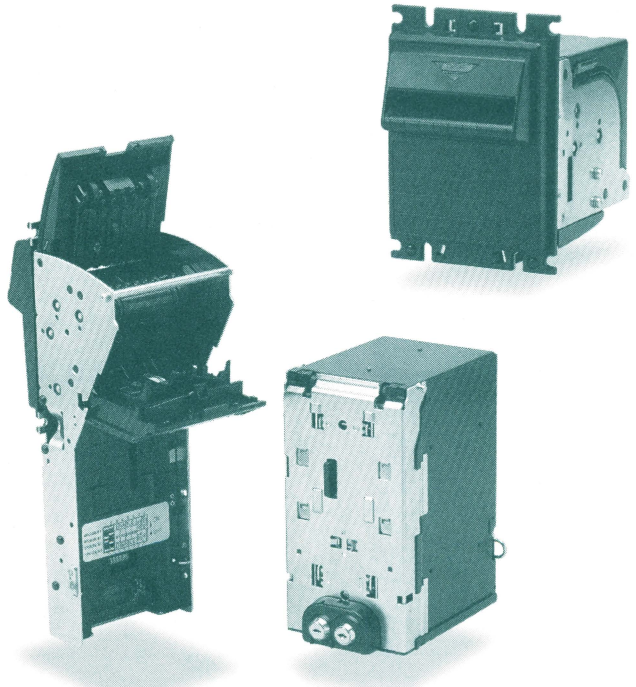

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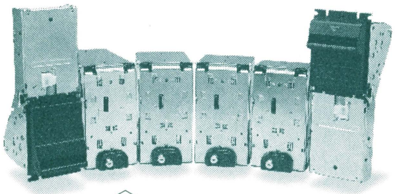

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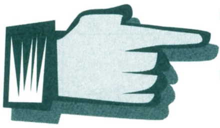

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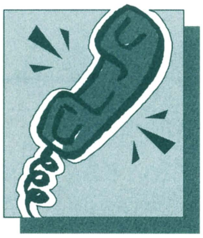

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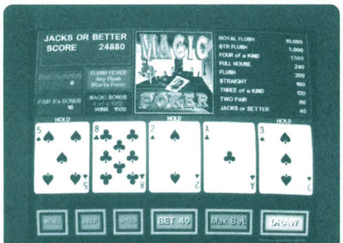
JACKS OR BETTER
SCORE 24880
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STR FLUSH
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FULL HOUSE
FLUSH
STRAIGHT
THREE of a KIND
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JACKS or BETTER
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BET 40
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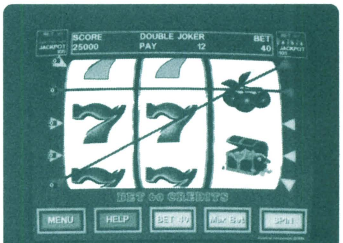
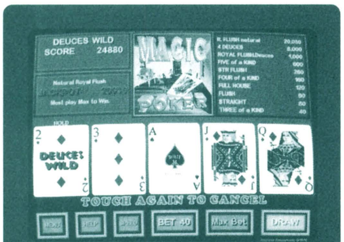

SCORE 25000
DOUBLE JOKER
PAY 12
BET 40
JACKPOT
BET 60 CREDITS
MENU
HELP
BET 40
Max Bet
SPIN

DOUBLE JOKER


DEUCES WILD
SCORE 24880
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TOUCH AGAIN TO CANCEL
BET 40
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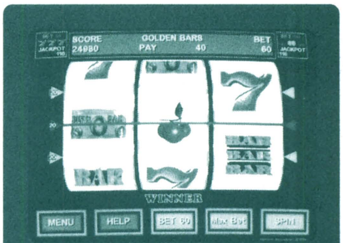
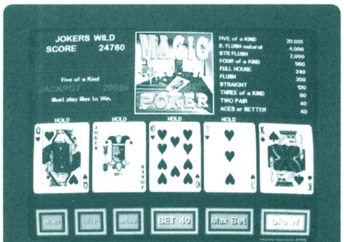
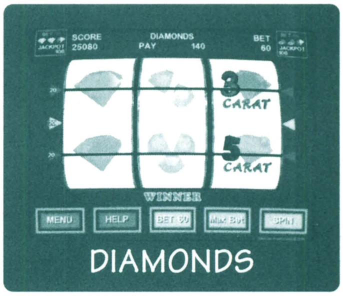
DEUCES WILD


SCORE 24980
GOLDEN BARS
PAY 40
BET 60
JACKPOT
WINNER
MENU
HELP
BET 60
Max Bet
SPIN

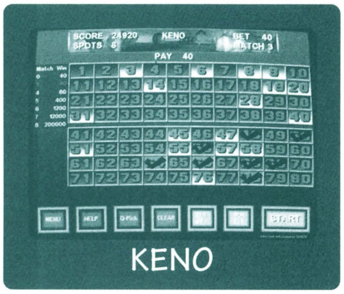
GOLDEN BARS


JOKERS WILD
SCORE 24760
HOLD
BET 40
Max Bet
DRAW

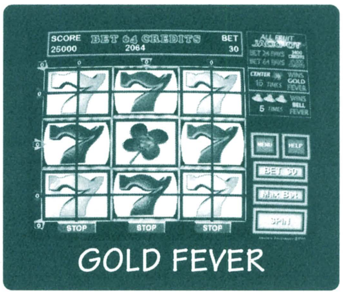
JOKERS WILD


SCORE 25080
DIAMONDS
PAY 140
BET 60
JACKPOT
3 CARAT
5 CARAT
WINNER
MENU
HELP
BET 60
Max Bet
SPIN

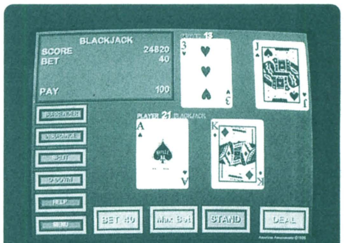
DIAMONDS


SCORE 24920
SPOTS 8
KENO
BET 40
MATCH 3
PAY 40
MENU
HELP
CLEAR
START

KENO


SCORE 25000
BET 64 CREDITS
2064
BET 30
STOP
STOP
STOP
MENU
HELP
BET 30
Max Bet
SPIN

GOLD FEVER


BLACKJACK
SCORE 24820
BET 40
PAY 100
PLAYER 21 BLACKJACK
HELP
MENU
BET 40
Max Bet
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September

6th **Columbus, OH** Buckeye Building, Ohio State Fairgrounds 17th Avenue & I-71, Exit 111 Cellular: 614-271-7626 At Reorder Tone Dial: 502-551-1866	**13th** **Indianapolis, IN** Our Land Pavilion Indiana State Fairgrounds, 1202 East 38th Street Cellular: 317-432-7626 At Reorder Tone Dial: 502-551-1866	**20th** **Pensacola, FL** 6655 Mobile Highway *For information call* **Tony Gaeto** at 813-969-2000 **NEW LOCATION**	**20th** **Des Moines, IA** University and E. 30th St. Iowa State Fairgrounds *For information call* **Tom Rhoades** at 515-774-8424	**27th** **Pennsauken, NJ** South Jersey Expo Center, 2323 Route 73 *For information call* **Rob** at 609-729-5374	**27th** **Kansas City, KS** Wyandotte Co. Fairgrounds 1405 North 98th Street *For information call* **Tom Rhoades** at 515-774-8424

October

11th **Tampa, FL** Florida State Fairgrounds Interstate 4 to Orient Road Cellular: 813-690-7626 At Reorder Tone Dial: 502-551-1866	**18th** **Louisville, KY** Ky Fair and Expo Center, West Hall 'B', Take I-65 to I-264 to Fairgrounds Exit 502-551-1866

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November

1st **Indianapolis, IN** Our Land Pavilion Indiana State Fairgrounds, 1202 East 38th Street Cellular: 317-432-7626 At Reorder Tone Dial: 502-551-1866	**8th** **Columbus, OH** Buckeye Building, Ohio State Fairgrounds 17th Avenue & I-71, Exit 111 Cellular: 614-271-7626 At Reorder Tone Dial: 502-551-1866	Collector's Auctions **15th** Collector's Auctions **Chicago, IL** **Ramada Inn - O'Hare** 6600 N. Manhiem Road, Rosemont, IL *7th Annual Pinhead Collector's Auction in association with Pinball Expo '97.* Attendance information contact: Rob Berk at 1-800-323-3547 A 10% Buyers Premium will be applied.	**22th** **Kansas City, KS** Wyandotte Co. Fairgrounds 1405 North 98th Street *For information call* **Tom Rhoades** at 515-774-8424	**29th** **Des Moines, IA** University and E. 30th St. Iowa State Fairgrounds *For information call* **Tom Rhoades** at 515-774-8424	**29th** **Pennsauken, NJ** South Jersey Expo Center, 2323 Route 73 *For information call* **Rob** at 609-729-5374

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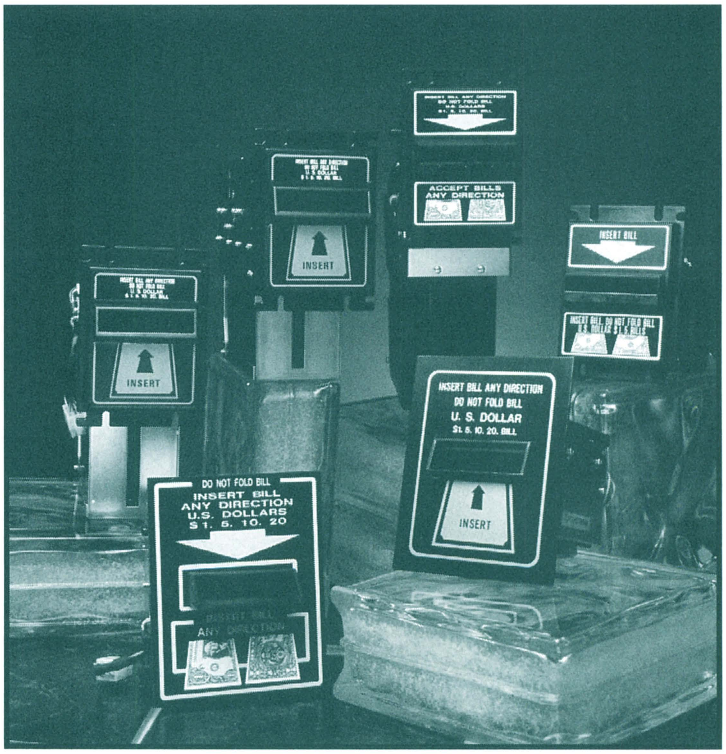

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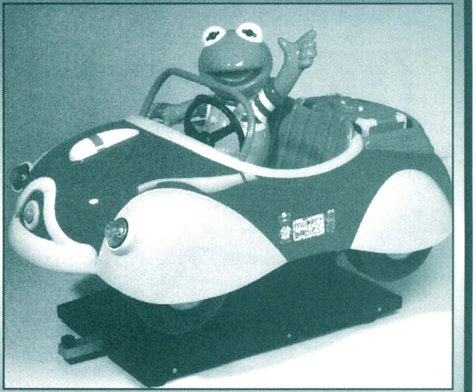

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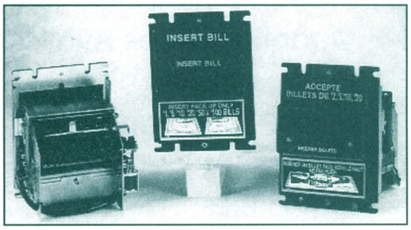

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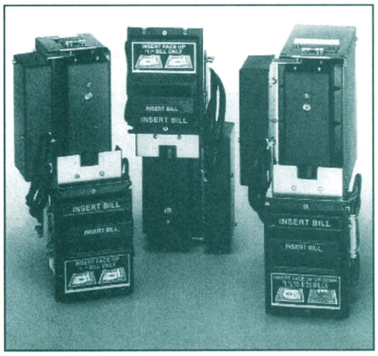

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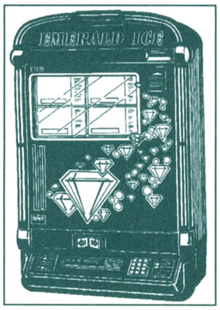

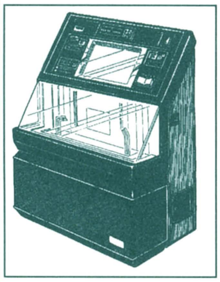

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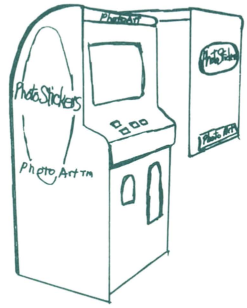

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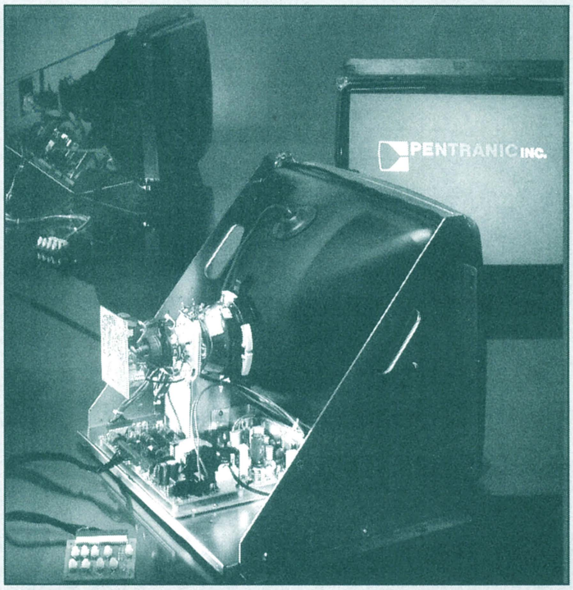

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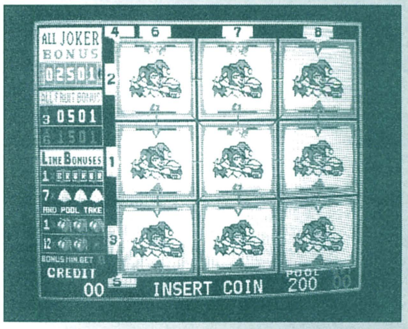

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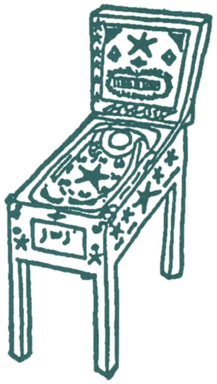

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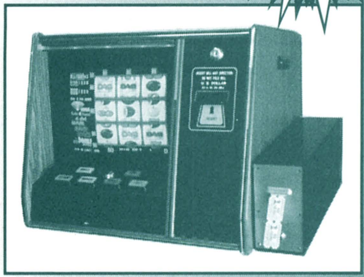

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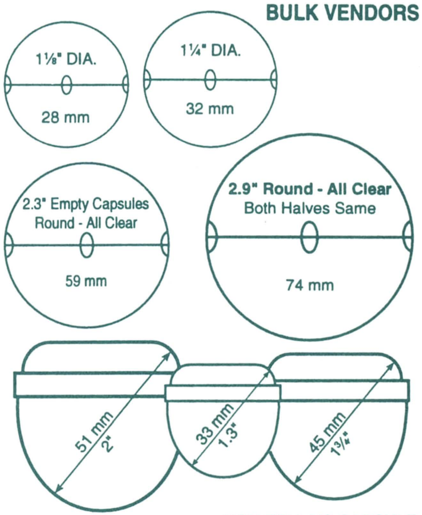

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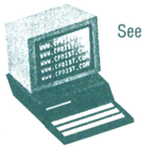

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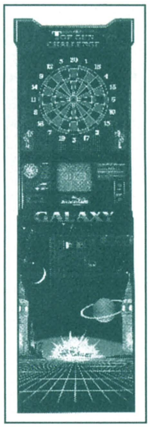

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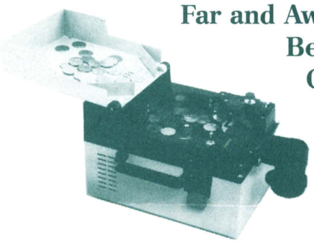

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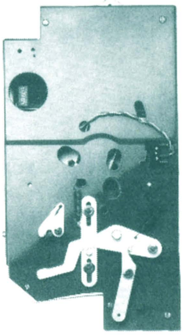

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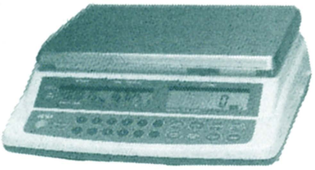

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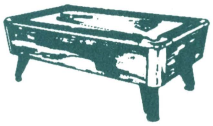

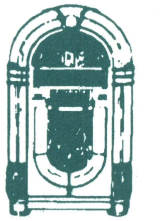

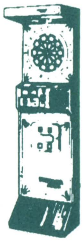

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	2	--	"Los Huracanes Del Norte"	Top Norteno
	3	9	"Los Tucanes De Tijuana"	Tucanes de Plata
	4	--	"Banda Maguey"	El Mundo Gira
	5	1	"Los Tucanes De Tijuana"	Tucanes de Oro
	6	2	"Los Originales De San Juan"	El Clavo
	7	3	"Banda El Recodo"	Tributo A Juan Gabriel
	8	4	"Bronco"	La Ultima Huella
	9	7	"Grupo Limite"	Ronpiendame El Alma
	10	6	"Vicente Fernandez"	Y Sus Canciones
TROPICAL	1	--	"Ilegales"	Rebotandor
	2	3	"Olga Tanon"	Llevame Contigo
	3	1	"Fito Olivares"	Con Amor Y Con Sabor
	4	--	"Kinito Mendez"	El Decreto DB
	5	--	"Victor Manuelle"	A Pesar De Todo
	6	--	"Meren Booty Girls"	X-Tra Hot
	7	--	"Gloria Estefan"	Mi Tierra
	8	10	"Compilation"	Merengon
	9	2	"Julio Iglesias"	Tango
	10	--	"Grupo Mania"	Esta De Moda
POP	1	4	"Juan Gabriel & Rocio Duracal"	Juntos Otra Vez
	2	2	"Enrique Iglesias"	Vivir
	3	1	"Los Temerarios"	En Concierto Vol. II
	4	3	"Marco Antonio Solis"	En Pleno Vuelo
	5	7	"Los Mismos"	Juntos Para Siempre
	6	8	"Fey"	Tierna La Noche
	7	10	"Shakira"	Pies Descalzos
	8	6	"Grupo Mojado"	Sueno Y Realidad
	9	--	"Te Sigo Amando"	Compilation
	10	9	"Ana Gabriel"	Vivencias
TEJANO	1	1	"Los Angeles Azules"	Inolvidables
	2	5	"Conjunto Primavera"	Sangre De Valiente
	3	--	"La Diferenzia"	Canta Contigo
	4	9	"Eddie Gonzalez"	El Disgusto
	5	--	"La Mafia"	En Tus Manos
	6	--	"Bryndis"	Mi Verdadero Amor
	7	--	"Bobby Pulido"	Ensename
	8	2	"Conjuno Primavera"	Me Nacio Del Almo
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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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Nightclub & Bar Expo, Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Fla. Contact Nightclub & Bar Magazine, (601)236-5510; fax (601)236-5541.

August 21-22
Ohio Coin Machine Association 23rd Anniversary Expo, Ramada University Inn & Conference Center, Columbus, Ohio. Contact David Corey or Judy Martin, (614)888-9772; fax (888-9767.

September 23-26
7th Fun Expo, Sands Expo Center, Las Vegas, Nev. Contact Bailey Beeken, (914)993-9200; fax (914)993-9210.

October 5-7
National Association of Convenience Stores Annual Meeting and Expo, Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Fla. Contact NACS, (703)684-3600; fax (703)836-4564 (general) or (703)549-1750 (registration).

October 10-15
World Waterpark Association 17th Annual Symposium and Trade Show, San Antonio, Texas. Call (913)599-0300; fax (913)599-0520.

October 14-16
World Gaming Congress & Expo, Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, Nev. Contact Andrea Schatz, (212)594-4120, ext. 232; fax (212)714-0514.

October 16-18
National Automatic Merchandising Association National Convention and Trade Show, Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Fla. Contact NAMA, (312)346-0370; fax (312)704-4140.

October 23-25
AMOA International Expo, Georgia World Congress Center, Atlanta, Ga. Contact AMOA (312)245-1020; fax (312)245-1085.

October 28-30
Amusement Industry Expo '97, I-X Center, Cleveland, Ohio, Call (800)870-EXPO (3956); fax (216)265-2621.

November 18-22
79th International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions Convention and Trade Show, Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Fla. Contact IAAPA, (703)836-4800; fax (703)836-4801.

November 21-22
Amusement and Music Operators of Virginia Convention and Trade Show, Sheraton Airport, Richmond, Va. Contact Bill Carnohan, (804)748-2092.

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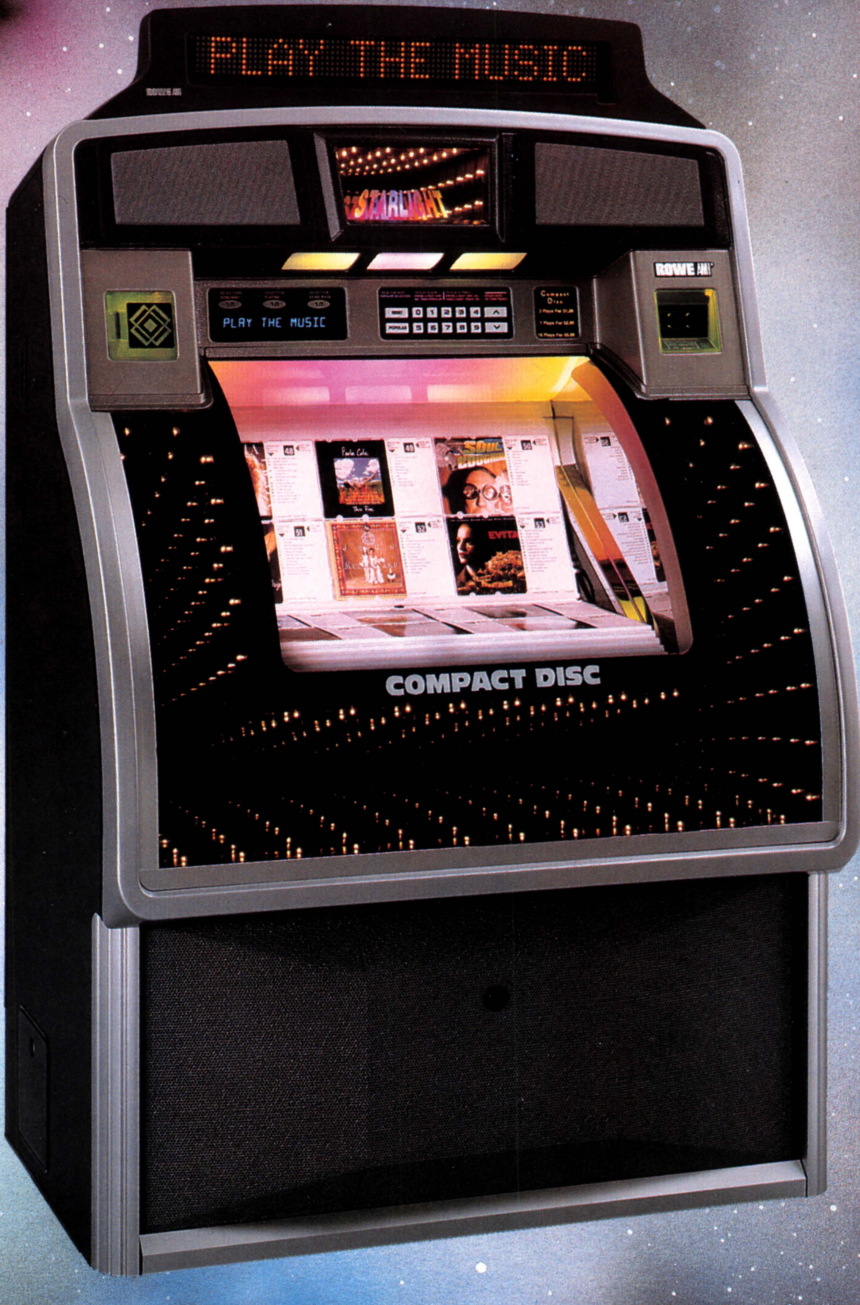

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